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Black Watch soldiers 'swore oaths to Hong Kong triads'

FROM JONATHAN BRAUDE
IN HONG KONG

BRITISH troops from the Black Watch regiment said to have sworn a blood oath of allegiance to a Chinese secret society are to get immunity from prosecution in Hong Kong in exchange for information on Triad crime gangs.

to join the Sun Yee On Triad, one of the biggest and most ruthless of the illegal Chinese secret societies. Triad membership is a criminal offence in Hong Kong. But at least a dozen soldiers went through the full initiation ceremony after they began moonlighting as bouncers in bars and nightclubs controlled by the gangs, the newspaper said. It said the Hong Kong police agreed not to prosecute in exchange for information.

last tour of duty in August 1994, and are not believed to have continued their involvement with the Chinese underworld in the UK. The regiment will go back to Hong Kong in February 1997.

The newspaper said the men were approached by the Sun Yee On while they were drinking in the seamy Wanchai bar area and offered work. It quoted police sources as saying the club's usual security men had trouble dealing with foreign servicemen, especially the American and Australian navy. Chinese bouncers were tough enough to deal with all

comers but the Triads thought it was easier to find bouncers who could deal with them in English. It is not clear how the police discovered the soldiers' involvement or traced them in the UK, but the report said at least three had been brought back in the course of last year to give statements. They were given a guarantee they would not be prosecuted for Triad membership.

Military sources expressed some scepticism yesterday about what use such evidence would be to the Hong Kong police, with its long experience of Triads. They also said the garrison would normally be contacted if soldiers were brought back to Hong Kong. The source also suggested that it would have been hard for British squadries to work as bouncers without attracting the attention of the military police.

A garrison spokesman said that HQ British Forces Hong Kong had no knowledge of any British servicemen being brought back to Hong Kong in connection with any case. "But I can't give you a categorical denial."

Tories trade insults over defection

By NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TORY party infighting escalated yesterday as leading figures from the Right and Left traded insults in the wake of Emma Nicholson's defection to the Liberal Democrats.

Michael Portillo, the Defence Secretary, accused Miss Nicholson of talking "awful nonsense" in claiming that her departure had been precipitated by a lurch to the Right.

John Redwood, who last summer resigned from the Cabinet to stand against Mr Major, echoed Mr Portillo's insistence that under Mr Major's "moderate" leadership the charge of extremism levelled by Miss Nicholson did not stand up.

Police fear for woman missing in Thailand

BRITONS returning from Thailand are being urged to contact police if they have any information about Johanne Mashedier, a young solicitor, who has disappeared while on a back-packing holiday.



Joanne Mashedier who has disappeared while on a back-packing holiday

Saudi king hands over power to half-brother

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

KING FAHD of Saudi Arabia yesterday handed over the running of his country to his half-brother, Crown Prince Abdullah, saying that he needed to rest after suffering a stroke in November.

The House of Saud, page 8
Leading article, page 15

New owners for New Look

Tom Singh and his family have sold New Look, one of the largest retailers of women's clothing, to institutional investors for £170 million. The sale comes one month after plans were abandoned to float the chain, which has 305 outlets in the UK. The Singhs will own 25 per cent of a new company set up to own New Look.

Liverpool come from behind

Stan Collymore scored against his former club, Nottingham Forest, as Liverpool turned a two-goal deficit into a 4-2 victory in the FA Cup. The Reds were beaten 2-0 by Aston Villa.

Internet Times

The Internet edition of The Times is now available on...
http://www.the-times.co.uk

Bar chairman denounces Howard's sentencing plan

By FRANCES GIBB AND RICHARD FORD



Penry-Davey: attack on get-tough policy

THE Home Secretary is on a collision course with the legal profession and judiciary over his plans for minimum sentences to be outlined in a White Paper this spring.

of between five and ten years for people convicted again of carrying an illegal firearm. The Home Secretary's tough sentences for a repeat offence by rapists, serious sex offenders and violent criminals are expected to form the centrepiece of a crime Bill to be introduced in the next session of Parliament in November.

Burst pipes add to seasonal misery

By ADRIAN LEE

MILLIONS of homes across Britain were without water yesterday as the new year thaw revealed burst pipes and mains. Scotland and the Northeast, which had record low temperatures during the holiday week, were worst hit.

People were asked to conserve supplies as engineers worked to repair the burst mains. Shortages were compounded by taps left running to prevent pipes freezing.

Royal Family cuts foreign trips for work in Britain

By JEREMY LAURANCE

THE busiest members of the Royal Family reduced their overseas visits by a third last year and devoted more of their time to work in Britain.

as listed in the Court Circular of The Times, from more than 1,500 in 1994 to 977 in 1995.

Only the Princess of Wales significantly increased her overseas engagements from eight in 1994 to 10 last year. The Queen and her family appear to be demonstrating that they can give good value for money at home despite the upheavals in the Prince and Princess of Wales' marriage.

than 1,500 engagements in Britain in 1995, more than a quarter up from the previous year. Their overseas engagements were down from 698 to 462.

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Fears persist that dwindling Conservative majority will affect peace talks

Unionists get no deals for backing Major

BY ANDREW PIERCE

SIR PATRICK MAYHEW, the Northern Ireland Secretary, yesterday told the Ulster Unionists not to expect any secret deals in return for their promise not to bring down the Government.

However, this has failed to allay fears in Dublin and at Westminster that the Unionists might be looked on more favourably by the Government in the negotiations for a settlement in Northern Ireland.

There was speculation last night that the Government would approve Unionist proposals for an elected convention in Northern Ireland. The proposals have been given a cool reception in Dublin.

Emma Nicholson's defection to the Liberal Democrats has made the support of the nine Ulster Unionist MPs crucial to the Government's survival. At the weekend they pledged not to vote with Labour in a no-confidence motion.

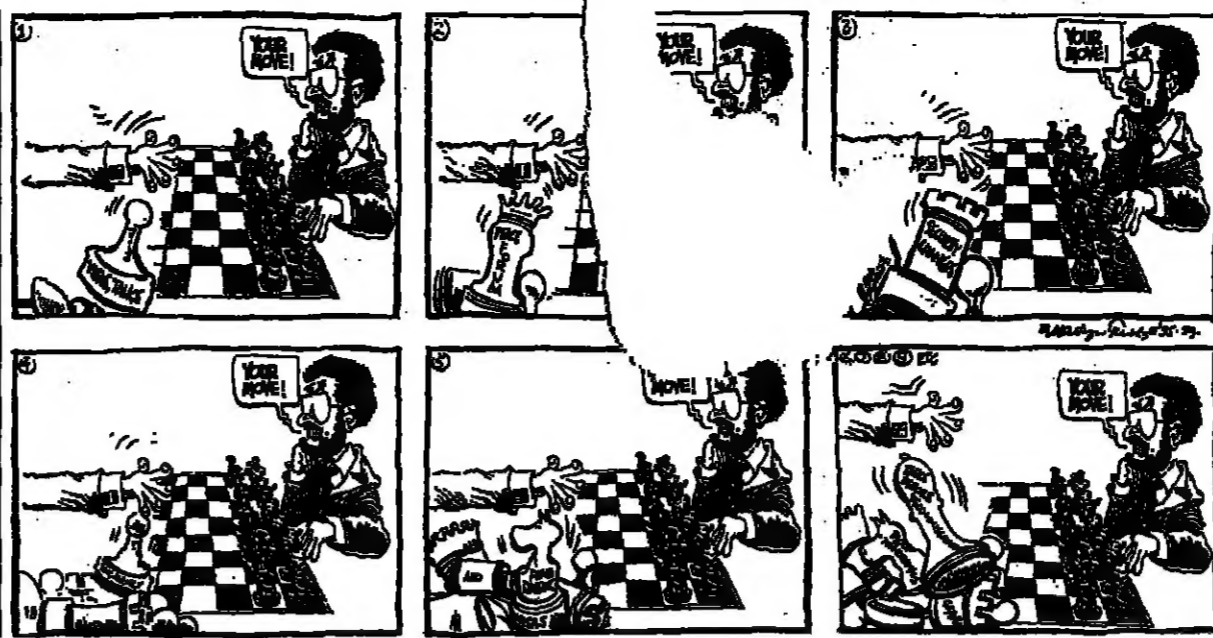
Sir Patrick, in a BBC interview, said that the Government had always listened to the Ulster Unionists, who represented the largest number of people in Northern Ireland. "But the Government will do its duty according to what it considers to be right. I recognise no difference in the essential equation by reason of events in the last few days or even a longer period."

Pressure on the Government intensified when Cardinal Cahal Daly, the leader of Ireland's Roman Catholics, said it would be "most unfortunate" if the Tories' shrinking majority at Westminster held up progress for a peaceful solution.

The Cardinal, speaking at a mass for World Peace Day in his Armagh archdiocese, said: "It may well be politically difficult for John Major to initiate significant political movement in Northern Ireland at this time, but it would



Turner and the cartoon that particularly incensed Sinn Féin. He says the party must "grow up" and learn to accept criticism in order to take part in democratic politics



Sinn Féin accuses cartoonist of 'cruelty' to Adams

BY NICHOLAS WATT
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

IRELAND'S leading cartoonist has no infuriated Sinn Féin by depicting Gerry Adams as a blood-stained defender of terrorists that the party has accused him of cruelty.

Martin Turner, who has become the first cartoonist to be named as Ireland's top political commentator, laughs off the criticism. The cartoonist, whose political sketches in the *Irish Times* influence thinking on both sides of the border, has

told Sinn Féin to "grow up". Sinn Féin was particularly incensed by one cartoon in which Mr Adams was drawn sitting on one side of a chess board repeatedly shouting "Your Move" as America, Ireland and Britain grant him a string of concessions. Sinn Féin, which is sensitive about seeing its president drawn as a bearded fanatic, squinting behind his glasses, wrote to Mr Turner to complain after he allowed the Northern Ireland Office to print the cartoon in an information booklet. The party also accused Mr Turner of

singling out the IRA for more criticism than the loyalists. Mr Turner, 47, an Englishman, graduated from Queen's University Belfast in 1971, and started his journalistic career in Northern Ireland editing the political magazine *Fortnight*. However, he was always determined to be a cartoonist. He says: "It's a bit strange that Sinn Féin should accuse me of being cruel to them after what they did for 25 years. It's part of the growing-up process. If they want to take part in democratic politics, they will have to get used to

commentators using what weapons we have to criticise them." Mr Turner, who describes himself as a "non-unionist, non-nationalist, non-violent, non-entirety", has spared nobody in the past year as he lampoons politicians over the peace process. The Rev Ian Paisley's eyes roll in permanent disgust and John Major looks bemused by the difficulties. The cartoonist has just published a collection of his work entitled *Pack up Your Troubles*. Sitting in his studio at home in Co Kildare he says that most people in Northern

Ireland are sick of paramilitaries and want to get on with their lives. "My thesis is that the majority of people in Northern Ireland don't care about politics. They are interested in jobs and secure homes. They vote along tribal lines but that does not mean they devote their entire lives to pursuing those goals," he says. His book was "for the people who have been pursuing the peace process in their daily lives for the last 25 years (not just the last 25 minutes) by not joining in the nonsense we call the Troubles."

Tories

Continued from page 1
in, in defence of British interests the way that she did."

In his interview, Mr Portillo hit back at Miss Nicholson's claim that his Brussels-bashing speech at the Tory conference, which she has since likened to the rhetorical excesses of Nazi Germany, played a part in her defection. He accused Miss Nicholson of having a "history of disloyalty" in supporting Baroness Thatcher day after day, then "stabbing her in the back" on the eve of the 1990 leadership contest. But he also inflamed divisions by suggesting there was no place for Eurosophes inside the party.

"She [Miss Nicholson] has now joined the Liberal Democrats, who are a Euro-federalist party. They want a United States of Europe and the Conservative Party is the party that is dedicated to opposing federalism. If that is what Emma believes, then she is right to leave us."

The counteroffensive by the Right reflected the belief among its supporters that the Prime Minister would be forced to moderate his approach to avoid provoking more walk-outs by dissidents. One senior figure said: "My belief is that going in Emma Nicholson's direction, on Europe would be the last straw in terms of alienating the public. But she does have a point with her Alice in Wonderland 'Will we, won't we' criticism. This is the fundamental weakness of the Government — we cannot give a clear lead over Europe."

Mr Temple-Morris cited pressure for tax cuts at the expense of public services, Michael Howard's efforts to crack down on illegal immigrants and impose longer sentences on criminals, centralisation and local government finance as areas of concern. But he was also alarmed by the Government's tone of voice. "A little bit more sympathetic rhetoric would undoubtedly help. We should steady the party and I don't think that the torrent of personal abuse, which was the hearing against Emma Nicholson is exactly helpful."

Leading article, page 15

Charles starts ski trip with princes

The Prince of Wales, his sons William and Harry and their nanny Tiggy Legge-Bourke started a skiing holiday in Klosters, Switzerland, yesterday. They arrived in Zurich on time in spite of thick fog over East Anglia that caused their flight from RAF Marham in Norfolk to be diverted. The royal party, including Charles's private secretary, Commander Richard Aylard, accompanied by his daughter Sophie, ten, drove to the ski resort in a seven-car convoy. Also in the group were a valet, secretary and protection officers.



Sir Patrick Mayhew said yesterday that the defection of Emma Nicholson would not affect peace prospects, a fear expressed by Cardinal Cahal Daly. Ken Maginnis said Unionists were "not expecting any special deals"

Tory think-tank seeks end to redundancy law

BY NICHOLAS WOOD, CHIEF POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

TORY policy advisers are to urge John Major to sweep away the framework of laws protecting workers against redundancy and unfair dismissal. They believe that employment protection legislation dating from the 1960s interferes with the free operation of the labour market, destroying jobs and holding back the economy.

The radical proposals, which will be bitterly contested by Labour, are to be published next week in a paper from *Politica*, the newest of the Conservative think-tanks, which has close links with 10 Downing Street.

Warwick Lighthfoot, the report's author and a former Treasury adviser, is expected to argue that the Prime Minister's ambition of making Britain the "enterprise centre of Europe" will be threatened unless he is prepared to mount fresh assault on red tape.

Mr Lighthfoot agrees that the steps taken in the 1980s, which ended seven employment laws aimed at eroding the power of trade unions, have yielded big gains, giving Britain the most liberal labour law in the European Union. But he is understood to say that the existing "spaghetti" of rules still distorts employers' decisions, reduces productivity and raises unemployment.

He is expected to call for repeal of the Redundancy Payments Act 1965 — which ended entitlement to a lump-sum payment — and to suggest that employers who lose their jobs should be offered a "milkshake" of benefits (Consolidated Pension Plan, which has 160 million and 14 schedules of benefits) and a "milkshake" of benefits.

Instead, employers and employees would be free to negotiate their own terms and conditions of employment and aggrieved workers would be free to sue in the ordinary courts rather than seek recourse in employment tribunals. More jobs would be created and competition between firms for staff would prevent exploitation, he believes.

Mr Lighthfoot is understood to claim that workers operating in a deregulated labour market would be in much the same position as consumers in a highly competitive high street. Just as shoppers can go elsewhere if a store is charging too much or offering substandard goods, so workers would be able to shop around for good employers.

A danger of the existing system is that the courts can interpret different and seemingly unrelated sets of regula-

tions in bizarre ways — for instance the House of Lords decision forcing the Government to extend employment protection legislation to part-time workers to avoid falling foul of an EU directive on discrimination against women. But Mr Lighthfoot will not advocate a free-for-all. Legislation protecting young workers and covering health and safety and discrimination would remain.

The vast majority of vacancies available through jobcentres do not pay a living wage for a couple with two children, according to the Manchester-based Low Pay Unit. A year-end analysis of vacancy data from all the major jobcentres in Greater Manchester shows that more than nine out of ten jobs pay less than £200 a week.

A quarter of all the jobs paid below the National Insurance threshold of £58 a week.

Times crossword open to doubles

BY BRIAN GREER, CROSSWORD EDITOR

A QUARTER of a century after its inception, The Times Crossword Competition will for the first time this year contain a doubles as well as a singles championship.

Many readers do the crossword with a friend or partner and we hope that they will now be encouraged to have a go together, knowing they will be pitted against others who also prefer to work in tandem.

Aberlour, producers of Single Highland Malt Scotch whisky, are sponsoring the competition and from this week onwards will also be providing the prizes for the Saturday Prize Crossword. Successful competitors at the regional finals can look forward to taking home a bottle of the malt and we expect that all competitors will have a chance to sample the product.

The basic format of the competition remains the

same, with all competitors required to tackle four normal puzzles during the course of an afternoon. But this year we hope to eliminate the Eliminator, which may disappoint some who look forward to this annual feature, but will mean that nobody need be disappointed at an early stage. Subject to confirmation when the first qualifying puzzle is published on Thursday, January 18, the venues for the regional finals will be: Manchester (Sunday, February 25); Edinburgh (Sunday, March 31); Bristol (Sunday, April 28); London (Saturday, May 25); Birmingham (Sunday, July 7). By moving to a large hotel ballroom for the London event, we hope to accommodate everyone who wants to take part on a single afternoon.

Crosswords, pages 18, 36

MP says fishermen face more cuts in quotas

BY ANDREW PIERCE

FURTHER cuts in fishing quotas were predicted by a Conservative MP yesterday as the Royal Navy patrolled the waters known as the Irish Box to prepare for the latest incursion by Spanish vessels.

HMS *Lindisfarne*, the fisheries protection vessel, moved into the waters as a European Union agreement took effect, giving 40 Spanish vessels access to the seas around Ireland.

David Harris, the MP for St Ives and chairman of the Tory fisheries committee, has written to the Prime Minister to call for changes to the European Union's Common Fisheries Policy, which is strongly opposed by fishermen in the South West.

Mr Harris, whose constituency includes the fishing port of Newlyn, said that admitting the Spanish boats would lead to further cuts in quotas and made a mockery of con-



The result is going to be massive over-fishing of stocks already under pressure.

He said it would be difficult to ensure that there were only 40 Spanish boats at a time in the box. The capacity for deception was vast in a huge area of sea where boats could dodge in and out. "I am highly sceptical of the ability to police it," he said. Mr Harris, who last month voted against the Government in the Commons vote on Spanish access

to the area, said the agreement was a black day for the fishing industry. He said that more control of home waters had to be handed back to EU member states, with stocks conserved through net sizes and protected areas rather than just quotas.

Tony Baldry, the Fisheries Minister, told BBC Radio 4's *The World At One* yesterday that the Spanish would not be getting any extra fish by coming into the Irish Box. "They will be policed equally fiercely on the catches that they take to make sure the fish are the proper size and are within quota, as much as ensuring that there are no more than 40 trawlers at any one time in the Irish Box," he said.

"I have no reason to think other than that the Spanish will fully comply. They have already started to do so. They have provided the names of the first 20 trawlers which are going to be in the Irish Box and the exact day they are going to be fishing."

"It will be a very strict Spanish skipper who seeks to break the rules. If he does he will be brought in and he will be prosecuted."

Jim Portus, South West Fish Organisation, said presence was not always a deterrent. "It will be a Ministry of Fisheries and a man said yesterday that new fishing gear was not going to be known in a few



Lough-Scott opposed "brownfield" argument

Villagers fight to ground housing plan for airbase

BY MICHAEL HORNSBY
COUNTRYSIDE CORRESPONDENT

PLANS for a new housing estate on a former RAF airbase in the Oxfordshire countryside are emerging as a crucial test of the Government's rural White Paper.

Oxfordshire County Council is considering a proposal to build 5,000 houses on the 1,200-acre Upper Heyford base, six miles northwest of Bicester, which was used by the US Air Force from the 1950s until 1993.

On the face of it, the scheme looks tailor-made for John Gummer, the Environment Secretary. By 2005 he wants half of all new houses to be

built on previously developed land — so-called "brownfield" sites.

But the Upper Heyford proposal has provoked huge opposition from local people who say it would destroy the rural character of the Cherwell Valley. Tony Baldry, the Fisheries Minister, whose Banbury constituency includes Upper Heyford, has called the idea crazy and unjustified.

"A settlement of 5,000 houses would be twice the size of Chipping Norton and about the same size as Kidlington and would be completely out of proportion," he said. "Our area of the county has already taken more than its fair share of new housing." It was the formerly Tory-led Cherwell Dis-

trict Council which first encouraged the idea of a large housing estate at Upper Heyford. Second thoughts set in after last May's local elections, when control passed to a loose alliance of Labour and Liberal Democrat councillors.

Patrick Burke, the council's policy planning officer, said: "We want to see the site developed, but with no more than 1,000 houses and associated commercial facilities to provide about 1,500 jobs, coupled with afforestation of the rest of the land."

Even that would be too much for Cherwell Valley Parishes, a coalition of 20 villages set up to oppose the scheme. Its secretary is Ian Lough-

Scott, who works as a surveyor at Oxford University and has lived in Upper Heyford all his life.

"A village of 300 to 500 houses is the maximum we would like to see," he said. "What is being proposed amounts to a small town. The brownfield site argument is being used to justify a development that would never normally stand a chance of getting planning permission."

The council is committed to building 47,000 new houses over the period 1991-2011 and is still looking for sites for 12,000 of them. If Upper Heyford is ruled out, they would have to be built in existing towns or on greenfield sites.

Bad-tempered and extravagant? Blame it on the genes

SCIENTISTS have identified the gene that makes some people extrovert and eager for new experiences and others stolid and introverted. This is the first wholly convincing evidence linking a normal personality trait to the specific gene responsible.

The evidence is the more convincing because it comes from two groups, working independently and using different methods. The success opens up a whole new field of psychogenetics and may make it possible to understand much of individual psychology on the basis of genetic inheritance.

The two groups, in Israel and the United States, found that the trait known as "novelty seeking" is linked with a gene responsible for the

Next time you are heavily overdrawn, blame your parents. Two groups of scientists have now linked personality traits such as extravagance to a "novelty seeking" gene, Nigel Hawkes reports

brain chemical dopamine, which is known to be involved in controlling the emotions.

That some aspects of personality run in families has not been in doubt, as children often share many of their parents' traits. But the extent to which this is the result of the genes, or of upbringing, is open to argument. Studies on identical twins show that temperament, in particular, tends to be about half determined by the genes, and half by experience. The

Israeli team, led by Dr Richard Ebstein of the Herzog Memorial Hospital in Jerusalem, set out to investigate one temperamental trait, that of novelty seeking. Those who score high on this trait tend to be impulsive, exploratory, fickle, excitable, quick-tempered and extravagant. Those who score low are reflective, rigid, loyal, stoic, slow-tempered and frugal.

In a sample of 124 unrelated Israeli volunteers, they studied both test scores and genes. They

report in *Nature Genetics* that those who scored higher in the tests are more likely to possess a particular sequence of DNA base pairs — the letters that spell out the genetic code — right next to the gene responsible for making the dopamine receptor.

The differences do not lie in the gene itself, but in the region of DNA next to it. Receptors are the "sockets" on the surface of brain cells into which the chemical messengers — in this case dopamine — fit. The supposition is that the region of DNA that differs is the part that determines the strength of the binding between the messenger and its receptor.

This is apparently determined by the number of times a short section of DNA lying on the end

of the gene is repeated. Those with a large number of repeats are more likely to be novelty-seekers than those with a small number of repeats.

The finding is confirmed in the same issue of the journal by another team, led by Dr Dean Hamer of the US National Institute of Mental Health in Bethesda, Maryland. Dr Hamer is the scientist who has previously claimed to have identified a genetic difference between homosexuals and heterosexuals, a claim that is yet to be independently confirmed.

The US team used a different personality test and measured the length of the DNA repeat sequences in 315 people. They found that about two thirds of their

sample had between two and five of the repeated regions, while a third had six to eight. These differences correlated with differences in personality scores.

The result on its own is certainly not the key to personality. Dr Hamer estimates that the genetic differences identified account for only perhaps a tenth of the inheritability of the trait — in other words, there must also be other genes involved. This is no surprise, as it has always been assumed that complex traits will be determined by several, or perhaps many, genes.

But he adds: "A similar approach might be useful for detecting genes that identify abnormal psychological processes and health risk-related behaviours

such as tobacco smoking and excess alcohol consumption."

The Israeli team reaches similar conclusions. The agreement between their results and those of the Americans is particularly impressive, they say, because the projects involved slightly different tests, a different ethnic group, and the US team showed an association within members of a family as well as between unrelated individuals.

"Given the significant heritability of many human behaviours and the rapid progress of the human genome project, it is likely that additional genes that influence normal and abnormal psychological characteristics will be found in the future," they conclude.

Daughter failed to arrive on flight

Father of missing solicitor to scour 'hippy' islands

BY CAROL MIDDLEY

THE parents of a young British solicitor missing in Thailand will today scour a remote "hippy" island in the hunt for their daughter. Stuart and Jackie Masheder flew out to the Far East after Jo, 23, failed to return home for Christmas, and said they planned to travel to the islands of Ko Phangan and Ko Samui, about 335 miles south of Bangkok, and a favourite destination for New Age travellers.

Mr Masheder, a business manager with a large chemicals company, said he had no leads to work on and was relying on hunches. Miss Masheder had been due to fly home on December 22 to celebrate Christmas at the family home at Wincle, Cheshire, before starting a job with a firm of solicitors in London. Her parents last spoke to her by telephone from Chang Mai on December 7. On December 8 Miss Masheder sent a postcard from Bangkok to a friend, but there the trail went cold.

Mr Masheder, 49, has employed local private detectives and placed newspaper and radio advertisements appealing for information about his daughter. As she wanted to tour the islands in the south of Thailand before returning home, Mr and Mrs Masheder are concentrating on that area. Speaking from his hotel on Ko Samui, Mr Masheder said Christmas had been "hellish" for the family. "I thought she might have had problems travelling around but I became really worried when she missed the plane," he said.



He added: "When you get here you certainly understand that some of the more remote parts of the country, which is where backpackers like to go, do suffer from transport problems and communications difficulties. Unfortunately the trail has been completely cold so far with no sight, no sound of her. Our emotions are like a seesaw. I have appealed through the local press for anyone who might have been travelling with Jo in the north at the beginning of December, or on

her way to Bangkok on December 8, or after that travelling south to get in touch. We know there were South Africans with her but there may have been British people too."

Miss Masheder, a law graduate from York University, was on the final leg of a solo three-month round-the-world trip when she disappeared. Her travels had already taken her to Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Fiji. Cheshire police are liaising with Interpol in the search for her.

Wendy Millard, Miss Masheder's aunt, said: "We are all sick with worry. Jo has kept in touch with us all the time she's been away, either by telephone or postcard. Her parents flew out to Thailand to look for her because they couldn't sit at home waiting for news. She's such a happy, friendly, gregarious person and very, very responsible."

Police in Cheshire said Britons returning from holiday in the Far East may have crucial information about Miss Masheder's whereabouts. Inspector Bob Bates urged them to search their memories to provide even the smallest detail of her movements after December 8.

He said: "We are certain that other backpackers and holidaymakers who are returning home from Thailand will have seen this girl on their travels and could hold vital information about her whereabouts."

"It is so out of character for her to go off without a word and we are extremely concerned for her well-being."



Time and tide: Bob Smith, 72, and Mary Dowson, left, and Eleanor Atkinson, both 81, were among New Year's Day swimmers at Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear. Mr Smith took his first annual dip in 1951 and hasn't missed one since

Eubank blames weather for blast

BY CAROL MIDDLEY

THE former world boxing champion Chris Eubank said yesterday that he accepted full responsibility for a New Year's Eve fireworks party where two women suffered severe facial burns.

Mr Eubank, 29, who staged the impromptu celebration on Brighton beach for his family and friends, spoke of his regret after being questioned by police and released on bail. The two victims, aged 29 and 38, were injured when a firework ignited others and exploded into the crowd. The explosion is said to have rattled windows in restaurants on the seafront.

Both women were being treated at the Queen Victoria Hospital, East Grinstead, for serious burns to the face, neck, hands and chest. It is not yet known whether they will suffer permanent scarring.

Mr Eubank said yesterday: "I thought I was being safe but I reckoned without the weather. After I had ignited one firework the wind blew it into a whole bunch and they went up. I take full responsibility for what happened. After all they were my fireworks."

The former world super-middleweight champion said he had gone to the local police station voluntarily and had been arrested there. No charges were made but he was bailed to return to the police station in five weeks.

Mr Eubank, who lives in nearby Hove, had been entertaining his wife and two children at a hotel in Brighton. "I'm so sorry about this. Everyone was having such a good time," he said.

A Sussex Police spokesman said that the Health and Safety Executive had been called in to investigate the incident.

Man who took on muggers is shot dead

BY ADRIAN LEE

A PASSER-BY, who tried to stop a mugging was shot dead yesterday and two of his friends were injured.

Police were hunting a gang of four or five men who escaped in a car after the killing in the St Paul's area of Bristol.

Detectives said the victim, Evon Berry, from the neighbouring Montpelier area, had been on his way home from a New Year's Eve party when he intervened. Mr Berry, 37, who was married with three daughters, was shot in the head and staggered 50 yards before collapsing outside a taxi office.

One of the two friends, who are brothers, was shot in the side and the other was pistol-whipped. They were under guard in a Bristol hospital last night. The shot man, aged 36,



Berry: was returning from party with friends

was said to be "serious but stable". The other suffered a head injury that was not serious. A witness said Mr Berry pleaded for his life with his hands in the air before being shot at close range. The gunman suddenly turned on

the three men and fired two shots into the ground before threatening them.

The witness, who asked not to be named, said: "They backed off as soon as they saw the gun. But this guy was berserk. He fired two shots at Evon's feet and smashed the other guy in the face."

"He then turned and fired at the other two as they continued to back off. Evon just said 'Peace, peace', before he was shot."

The mugging target, a man in his 30s from the Southamptons area, was not seriously wounded and was able to give detectives information about his attackers.

The shooting happened at about 7 am as Mr Berry returned from supervising a party at the Malcolm X community centre, where he was caretaker. Mr Berry, a popular figure who was nicknamed

"Banga", saw a man being pistol-whipped. The victim was surrounded by a group of four men. Mr Berry and his friends asked what was going on and were told to "mind their own business".

As he and the others continued to protest they were threatened and gunshots were fired. As they moved backwards, their hands in the air, a man ran forward and more shots rang out, police said.

Mr Berry's widow, Linda, said: "He was a lovely man who was just a big, gentle person who would not hurt anybody. We will miss him, he was such a good father and a husband."

His sister, Jasmine, 26, said: "Everyone in the area liked him. He was a loving family man who cherished his wife and children. Evon enjoyed life to the full. He had a steady job, a beautiful loving family

and many friends. This has shattered the whole community. He has never done anything wrong. He was not into drugs or anything like that," she said.

The St Paul's area is notorious for drug dealing and was the scene of riots in the 1980s. Chief Inspector Piet Bishuevel, of Avon and Somerset Police, said: "The three men were walking home after a night out on New Year's Eve. Unfortunately they became the victims when they tried to intervene in what we believe to be an attempted street robbery."

"At this stage, there is no motive for the shootings. These men may just have been in the wrong place at the wrong time."

It is thought the gang of young men, who fled with only a gold necklace, came from outside the area.

Bloodhound turns up his nose at new slippers

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A BLOODHOUND walked five miles to fetch his master's discarded old slippers from a rubbish bin, rather than bring a new pair bought as a Christmas gift.

Fetching the old burgundy slippers for Nick Harrison, 47, had been Angus's job since he joined the household more than two years ago. When a new tartan pair took their place, the family knew there might be problems, so the old pair were taken away to be thrown in a bin outside at Mr Harrison's workplace, two-and-a-half miles from home.

Unfortunately, Angus had been taken along for a walk when the dumping took place just after Christmas. When

Mr Harrison took off his shoes in front of the television, Angus ignored the new fur-lined gift bought by the company director's wife Sue, 41, and vanished. He returned an hour later and dropped the old slippers at his master's feet.

Mr Harrison, of Pudsey, near Leeds, said: "He had always brought my slippers without me asking, and I wondered where he had got to. It was amazing. We thought it was hilarious."

The route would have taken Angus over fields, across a by-pass, through a shopping centre and into an industrial estate to reach the yard of Mr Harrison's graphic reproduction

company, and then back again. Because they have had problems in the past with Angus bringing in rubbish from the bin at home, the couple have often thrown things away at Mr Harrison's workplace.

Mrs Harrison, who breeds bloodhounds, said: "The dogs can sniff out a trail that is 12 hours old and Angus is always picking up scents when we take him walking."

"The new slippers had no scent to them, but the pong on the old pair must have been unbelievable to his nose. When he gets his nose down, he is oblivious to anything else until he locates what he's looking for. He has always

brought the slippers to Nick, and even used to sleep on them at night."

"He used to play with them as a puppy so he was quite attached to them."

The couple have three other bloodhounds, Emily, Ruth and Rocky, but only Angus has the habit of bringing back rubbish. "He has brought old clothes, a camera and kitchen gloves out of our bin at home, so Nick started throwing away personal items at work when he could," Mrs Harrison said.

The couple have now decided to keep the old slippers until Angus becomes accustomed to fetching the new tartan pair.



Slipper of the yard: Angus with his quarry

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Heads concede that women can also run schools

By DAVID CHARTER, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A 125-YEAR tradition ended yesterday when the Headmasters' Conference changed its name to recognise that schools can also be run by women.

The initials HMC will be retained by the society, set up in 1869 for the heads of a select group of boys-only schools. But the amendment, to the Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference, reflects a sea-change in independent school education in recent years, which has seen two-thirds of the HMC's 240 schools admit girls.

The renaming was agreed by members with just one dissenting (but anonymous) vote and came as the fourth HMC school headmistress was named. Priscilla Chadwick will become principal of both Berkhamsted School and Berkhamsted School for Girls, which previously had separate head teachers. The first female HMC head was appointed three

years ago. Gwen Randall took up her post at Framlingham College near Woodbridge in Suffolk in September 1993. She has been followed by Alison Willcocks at Bedales in Petersfield, Hampshire, and Helen Williams at the Royal National Institute for the Blind New College, Worcester.

Vivian Anthony, secretary of the HMC, said: "We are likely to find our schools appointing the best person for the job and there are certainly instances where, in a coeducational school, the best person could be a woman."

"The conditions of membership for HMC will remain the same even though the title has changed. We are not trying to snaffle the women from the Girls' Schools Association. It is simply recognising the fact that women are being appointed to coeducational school headships."



Lynette Mathieson, 27, with Georgia, born as midnight struck at Liverpool Women's Hospital. She wins £1,250 from a food firm as the first child of 1996

Council proposes merger to save education costs

Community split by plan for first all-age school

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

THE usually serene community of the Isles of Scilly is in conflict over proposals to merge the two schools on the main island, St Mary's. Councilors have decided that, with an ageing population, there are not enough children to support both a primary and a secondary school. Their solution is to set up the first all-age state school in England.

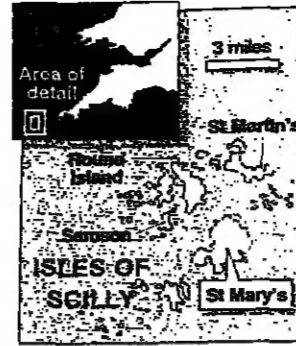
But the plan, which is still to be approved by Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, has opened deep divisions. One resident in ten has signed a petition opposing the merger, and there have been calls for a public inquiry amid allegations that the decision may have been based on misinformation.

Governors of the secondary school, which topped national examination league tables in 1994, have registered a statutory objection to the merger. The row has been simmering for three months, since Professor Duncan Graham,

former chief executive of the National Curriculum Council, recommended the merger to deal with rising deficits. The education authority called him in to find savings of £87,000 a year as the number of pupils fell. The islands' council is to hold a special meeting this month to reopen the debate.

Although the population of the islands has remained at just over 2,000 throughout the century, many of the new residents are retired. The primary school on St Martin's has only two pupils; that on St Agnes, eight. With 125 pupils, the one secondary school, on St Mary's, is England's smallest comprehensive. Within four years, it will be reduced to fewer than 100 pupils.

Professor Graham estimated that the authority could save £71,000 by merging the Isles of Scilly School with neighbouring Carn Gwaval primary school. But the figures, which were kept secret when councillors debated the



report in September, have been hotly disputed by opponents of the plan.

The secondary school's governors issued their own report last month, arguing that the savings would be "minimal" and the inevitable disruption would damage education. They claimed that councillors had supported the scheme in order to retain control of the schools' management.

A "diary of events" in the governors' report claims that secret talks with the primary school had been taking place

since the start of the year. A governor was said to have been "scorned and humiliated" when he tried to put the case against merger at a public meeting.

Marian Bennett, who resigned as a councillor before the furore broke, said: "There is clear evidence in this peaceful island haven of a breakdown of the democratic process, of misinformation and a total failure in the relationship between the local education authority and its schools."

Steve Watt, the council's tourism and development officer, acknowledged that the secondary school governors felt "bushwhacked", but said the scheme was the best financial and educational solution to the islands' problems. "It has developed into a schism between the primary school and the secondary school, which is a great shame."

Mrs Shephard has until the end of the school year to give her decision, but the council hopes she will make an announcement this month.

British airport chips put French fries to flight

By HARVEY ELLIOTT, AIR CORRESPONDENT

THE myth that airport restaurants and cafés in France serve better food than their British counterparts has been quashed by Egon Ronay.

While the self-appointed guru of culinary endeavours liberally peppers a new report on Heathrow's food outlets with words such as "excellent", "delicious" and "the best", the fare at Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris is "fit only for people who have damaged their palate".

Mr Ronay, it is true, had been paid by BAA, the airports operator, to compare catering standards in four of Europe's busiest airports. But he was accompanied throughout his investigation by two other people, who agreed with his findings.

"We are delighted with the result of the survey," said a BAA spokesman yesterday. "We always knew we had the best food and the widest choice at Heathrow and this has confirmed it." The Ronay results will be made available

to its European rivals, somewhat gleefully, by BAA.

They will show that some of the fare available at Schiphol (Amsterdam) was "not fit for humans" while the catering at Frankfurt was at odds with the Germans' reputation for efficiency. Mr Ronay concluded that many Heathrow caterers make better coffee, better chips and even better croissants than their continental competitors.

Schiphol is anchored at the foot of the Ronay airport league table, getting just one out of ten for the quality of its food. "It is for the food masochist," he says. "It is below criticism."

Charles de Gaulle is just ahead, with two out of ten. "The airport's catering runs completely contrary to the French reputation for food," Mr Ronay said. "I would advise people to eat before they get to the airport."

He gave Frankfurt four out of ten. "All the catering, including the food, exudes inefficiency," Heathrow was awarded six-and-a-half to seven out of ten.

Among the outrages the team's stomachs were subjected to was an "absolutely scandalous" croque monsieur and a "rather laughable" croissant in Paris; a hot dog sausage at Schiphol which tasted "like a piece of leather"; and an "inedible" matjes herring in Frankfurt.

Mr Ronay and his team centred much of their attention on the most commonly bought products with coffee and chips being given marks out of ten. Heathrow came top in both. The most highly rated chips, which were half a mark short of perfection, were at the Heathrow Burger King. The worst, at Charles de Gaulle airport's French Riviera restaurant, received zero.

The best coffee — nine out of ten — was at Heathrow's The Grange restaurant in Terminal 3. Two outlets in Amsterdam and two in Paris both scored zero.

BA cracks secret of the flying toaster

By A STAFF REPORTER

ONE of the last great challenges of flying has been solved at last: how to make fresh toast and cappuccino at 35,000ft.

Until now, thin air has prevented even Italian airlines from persuading coffee to froth at high altitudes, while fear of fire has meant that toast had to be made on the ground and reheated in the air.

A secret technological breakthrough was launched last year by British Airways on VIP flights for the Queen and John Major. The equipment worked so well that it is being introduced on 90 planes flying long-haul routes.

First Class passengers will have their first taste of the new luxuries this week, before the scheme extends to Club World and World Traveller classes.

Passenger surveys by the airline had discovered that cappuccino coffee and fresh,

hot toast were two of the most wanted items on the airline's flights. The machines were designed by Blackpool engineering company Aerolux, and their secrets are being heavily guarded. All they will disclose is that the toaster has a cut-off device to prevent the toast burning and catching fire.

Each year, BA serves 40 million cups of coffee and 15 million pieces of reheated toast. The figures are expected to rise as the choice is widened.

The airline's manager of aircraft interiors, David Lake, said: "It is incredible that the world's most advanced aircraft, but just could not make a crisp piece of toast and decent Italian coffee on board until now."

"It seems so simple, but there's a feat of electronic engineering behind every cup and every slice."



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ABOVE ALL, IT'S A ROVER

Metvest may be answer to knife attacks

By OUR CRIME CORRESPONDENT

ALMOST 3,000 different types of knives have been used to test new body armour for London police officers. Within the next few months 440 suits of armour will be handed out at police stations in the capital for testing on the streets.

The Metvest is the result of nine months of research by Scotland Yard. To find a new formula for the armour the Yard examined 2,900 knives used in attacks on the London streets over 18 months. The armour is designed to protect against knife thrusts equivalent to a blade travelling at up to 6 metres a second, or 35 kilojoules of kinetic energy. It should also offer protection against handgun ammunition such as 9mm and .357 in bullets. At the same time the armour, which weighs less than two kilos, should be light enough to be worn throughout an eight-hour shift.

The Yard will not discuss the materials used or the possible price per vest but experts say the vests are likely to be based on Kevlar and would cost £200 or more each. The winner of the contract to produce the vests could almost certainly expect worldwide sales.

The specification was drawn up after the Yard tested existing armour on the market and found it unsuitable. Body armour was subjected to shots and stab wounds delivered by a special rig.

The Yard has already issued 4,000 sets of body armour for set-piece operations, such as sieges. They are often carried in cars. Another 1,000 sets of covert body armour are held in stock and may be used on dangerous surveillance or CID operations, including raids. The Metvest is intended for everyday use.

Deputy Assistant Larry Roach, heading the project, said: "The Metvest faces its crucial test. We will not ask whether it is wearable but whether police can carry out their full range of operational duties while wearing it covertly."

The search for protection followed a series of knife attacks and murders of officers which left police on the beat angry about the lack of official body armour. Police were particularly unhappy over the death of beat officer PC Patrick Dunne, shot when he went to investigate the murder of a drug dealer in south London. Sir Paul Condon, the commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, was personally told by beat officers about their anxiety.

Underworld stays silent as detectives piece together victims' last moments



Flowers and a memorial wreath still lie at the scene of the murder. A detective said: "Whatever society thinks of these three characters, they were loved and respected"

Second killer finished off drug dealers

By STEWART TENDLER

A GUNMAN who killed three drug dealers in Essex used an accomplice to help finish off his victims, police said yesterday. The victims trusted their killer so implicitly that they brought no weapons to a so-called business meeting in a quiet country lane near the village of Rettendon.

Almost four weeks after Tony Tucker, Patrick Tate and Craig Rolfe were found shot dead in their Range Rover, detectives are still facing a wall of silence. The underworld has so far ignored appeals for information and police fear criminals will take the law into their own hands.

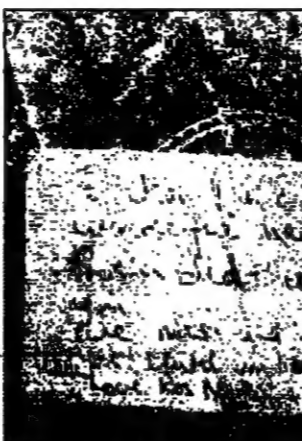
Yesterday, at the entrance to the lane where the men died, seven floral displays and a wreath still lay on the ground. One to Tate read: "A wonderful man. Poison did this to you."

It was December 6 when Rolfe, 26, drove his new car to the meeting. Analysis of the scene showed that another vehicle was already parked against the side of the track. The Range Rover drove by and halted at a gate.

As Rolfe halted with his foot on the brake, the gunman



Tate, left, described in one tribute as a wonderful man, was probably the assassins' prime target. Tucker and Rolfe died because they were with him.



moved forward and opened the rear offside door beside Tate. He swung up a short-barrelled, three-shot pump-action 12 bore and shot Rolfe and Tucker once each behind the ear. The last shot hit Tate full in the stomach.

The gunman then reloaded and shot all three again. He reloaded for a second time, and police think he may have handed the gun to a second man. This could have been the man who hired him, or his getaway driver. Whatever the reason, the gunman wanted to make sure someone else was

implicated in the killing. Two shots were fired and one was left in the gun in case the killers were challenged as they fled.

Detective Superintendent Ivan Dibley, leading a 40-strong murder squad, said: "It has got to be someone they trusted implicitly. Revenge is a realistic prospect. There is no way those three would go down there unarmed, unprepared and at ease."

Now there is fear in the underworld. Not only are criminals facing revenge but there is also distrust. Mr

Dibley said: "Whatever society thinks of these three characters, they were loved and respected."

At the same time, other teams of drug dealers and suppliers may try to fill the void created by the deaths. South Essex and the area around Basildon has become the home ground of traffickers stockpiling supplies brought from Holland via Harwich and Dover.

The three men dealt in a range of drugs including cannabis and Ecstasy. Tucker, the 38-year-old business brains of

the three, made enough from his illegitimate and legitimate interests to pay a £165,000 mortgage on a luxury home at the rate of £1,200 a month.

The killers may have been targeting just one of the trio, but may have had to kill them all. Investigators are concentrating on Tate, 37, released from prison five weeks before the shooting. An aggressive former armed robber and body builder who made heavy use of steroids, a mystery gunman had shot at him outside his home in Basildon while he was out on licence in

1994. Tucker is thought to have known Tate since their boyhood days. He was also keen on body-building and used steroids. He had built up a successful business providing burlap doormen for clubs and public houses from the Basildon area into the edge of the East End of London. In some cases club bouncers have become part of the drug supply system.

Rolfe, a heavy user of cocaine, was the "gopher" for Tucker and would run errands. Unlike the other two, he had no criminal record.

Remand for shopworker on stabbing charges

A supermarket worker appeared in court yesterday charged with ten attempted murders after shoppers and staff were stabbed in a knife attack. Shahid Iqbal, 22, of Birmingham, is also accused of attempting to cause grievous bodily harm to two police officers.

Mr Iqbal, a shelf-stacker at the Netto store in Bordesley Green, Birmingham, where the attack took place, was remanded in custody for eight days by city magistrates. Five people are recovering in hospital after the attack on Friday.

Lottery rush

A rush on National Lottery ticket outlets is expected as they reopen today after being closed for New Year's Day. The organiser, Camelot, believes the lottery jackpot, which will be at least £33 million, could reach £40 million this week as the double rollover draw on Saturday boosts sales.

Rooks survey

The British Trust for Ornithology is planning a survey of the impact on rooks of rural change. It is feared that their food supply could be under pressure because of modern farming methods and the recent hot and dry summers, and their nesting sites from Dutch Elm Disease and urban development.

Ex-teacher killed

A retired teacher was stabbed to death on his doorstep late on New Year's Eve in Snowdonia. William Hughes, 62, is believed to have opened the door to a caller at his cottage in Tregarth, near Bangor, Gwynedd. A police spokesman said that a local man, aged 26, was helping with their inquiries.

Famine marked

The Irish Government has approved £1,000 grants to restore 12 graveyards where victims of Ireland's famine are buried. The money is part of a programme to mark five years in the middle of the last century when the potato crop failure caused more than a million deaths and sparked mass emigration.

Superman hurt

A New Year party-goer dressed as Superman broke his ankle and suffered cuts to his head after jumping 15ft into a frozen canal near Leeds. The man, still wearing his fancy dress costume, was taken to Leeds General Infirmary by firemen from nearby Bramley.

Army transforms British Tommy into high-tech 'lethality man'

By MICHAEL EVANS
DEFENCE CORRESPONDENT

THE infantry soldier of the next century will become a high-tech "lethality man", according to a futuristic plan being drawn up by the Ministry of Defence.

By 2010, soldiers could be equipped with a helmet like that of a fighter pilot with a head-up display giving instant information about the battlefield.

Under a programme called future fighting soldier system, the MoD is researching ways in which the Army can take advantage of the best military technology without requiring the infantryman to have a doctorate in physics or to carry a heavy power pack to keep all the electronic gadgets working over long periods.

The aim of the study, which is being carried out by the MoD's defence research agency, is to ensure that the British soldier is not equipped with the latest technology on a piecemeal basis, but as part of an overall concept.

In the past, new equipment has sometimes been supplied by the Army without proper assessment of how it will fit the soldier's needs in different battle situations. For example, soldiers trying out a new anti-tank gun discovered that they could not look through the eyepiece if they were wearing a respirator.

The early version of the "lethality man" — the description used by the MoD — focuses on the need to develop an integrated fighting system, incorporating new technologies to enhance combat effectiveness in the next century.

The first phase of the research programme is well



under way and envisages a soldier equipped with a helmet-mounted low-light camera, a head-up display behind a protective visor, and a rifle with an image intensifying sight and a laser aimer. The picture in the head-up display will be able to switch between

the camera and the weapon sight.

The key element of the research is to provide the soldier in the field with accurate up-to-date information which would allow him to outwit the enemy. The plan is to equip him with digital

mapping and compass, and the ability to transmit pictures back to headquarters, although not in real time.

Colonel Donald Wilson, who is in charge of the programme as deputy director of the Army's operational requirements, said the timing for the new look soldier involved three phases.

The first will come at the turn of the century when the Army's Bowman digitised combat radio is due to come into service. Five years later the Army is expected to introduce a "revolutionary" combat uniform, called Combat Soldier 2005 — replacing Combat Soldier 95 clothes which were unveiled last month.

Under government policy guidelines, in 2010 the fighting soldier will not be armed with a laser weapon that can kill or blind an enemy. Lasers will be used only in target marking and assessing ranges.

The Army's current S&B rifle will be improved with thermal imaging sights but the weapon itself is due to remain in service until about 2015, which means that the fully integrated soldier with a new high-tech rifle will not appear until after then.

Colonel Wilson said: "In every other area of operational capability, the Army thinks in terms of manning equipment. But an infantry soldier is the platform for equipment and it's vital he is given systems that suit his needs and abilities."

The new fighting system will be based around five elements — lethality, survivability, communications, mobility and sustainability (providing enough batteries to power the high-tech equipment).

Exports lift BBC income by £75m

By ALEXANDRA FREAN
MEDIA CORRESPONDENT

OVERSEAS sales of the BBC's documentary history series *People's Century*, which chronicles the events of the past 100 years, helped to push the corporation's commercial revenue to a record £75 million in 1995.

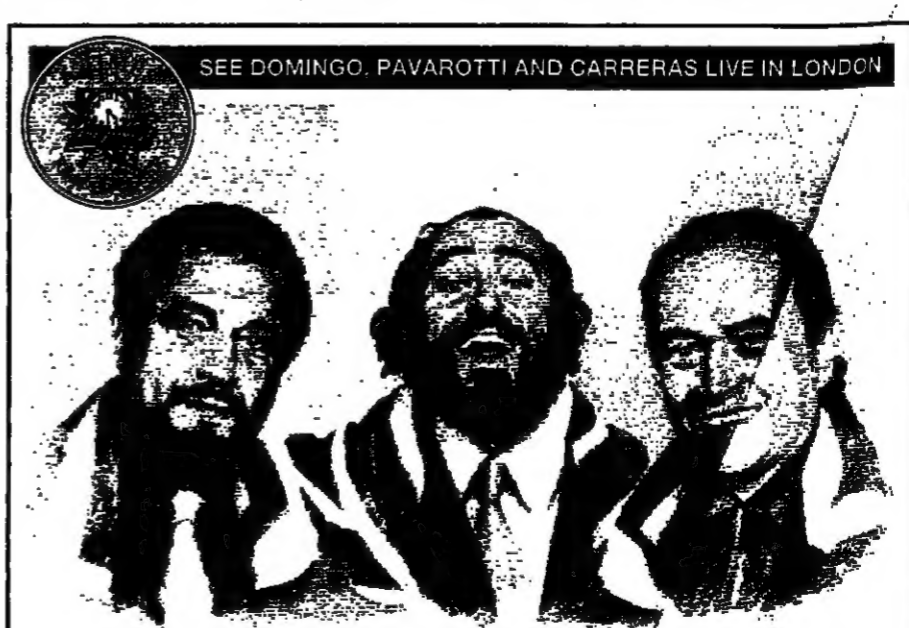
The 26-part series was sold to broadcasters in 14 countries in 1995, earning the BBC £5.6 million — more than half the £10 million production costs and more than any single factual series in its history.

Colin Jarvis, of BBC Worldwide, the corporation's commercial arm, said: "It is very rare to recoup the entire investment in a programme purely from international sales, but if *People's Century* continues at this level, we will get very close."

People's Century records the achievements and disasters of the 20th century through the eyes of the ordinary citizens who witnessed them at first hand.

The second best-selling programme was the six-part adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, which cost around £6 million to produce and achieved sales of £2.5 million in 15 countries. It was followed by *The Buccaneers*, an adaptation of Edith Wharton's unfinished novel, which earned £1.2 million.

Sir David Attenborough's six-part natural history programme, *The Private Life of Plants*, earned £1.1 million and the soap opera *EastEnders* came fifth with sales of £900,000.



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مكتبة الأمل

Fears over Agnelli's style cast doubt on EU agenda

FROM RICHARD OWEN IN ROME

AS ITALY took over the European Union presidency from Spain yesterday amid domestic political turmoil, there was uncertainty over whether Susanna Agnelli, the Foreign Minister, would be able to steer the EU through the critical opening stages of revising the Maastricht treaty during the next six months.

Signora Agnelli, sister of Gianni Agnelli, the Fiat magnate, became Foreign Minister a year ago at the age of 73 when Lamberto Dini took over as interim Prime Minister after the collapse of the Centre-Right coalition led by Silvio Berlusconi. At the weekend, however, Signor Dini resigned, and President Scalfaro asked parliament to decide this week whether Italy should hold elections or give Signor Dini a further term as caretaker leader. Signora Agnelli's fate therefore depends on Signor Dini's.

In his new year message, Signor Scalfaro hinted that he was against early elections, saying the interests "both of Italy and foreign countries" required at least six months' notice before a poll was held. He praised Signor Berlusconi's proposal for a government of national unity to complete Italy's electoral reforms.

However, the leaders of the Centre-Left parties want prior agreement on the reforms, including legislation on the media, which would directly affect Signor Berlusconi's control of Italian television. His opponents on the Centre Left regard his "broad coalition" as a ploy to avoid a trial later this month on bribery charges. The impasse leaves Signor Dini and Signora Agnelli holding the ring. Diplomats are alarmed, however, by the uncertainty over whether Signora Agnelli will be chairing EU ministerial meetings throughout the six-month presidency. Some go further, and are unsure whether she has the patience to manage EU affairs.

The colourful personality of Signora Agnelli, who writes an agony aunt column in the magazine *Oggi*, stems partly from her upbringing in the Agnelli dynasty. Her autobiography, *We Always Wore Sailor Suits*, describes a life of youthful privilege, with champagne for breakfast and wild drives with her brother on the Riviera.

She has remained untouched by Italy's corruption scandals, and, as the only woman in the Dini Cabinet, has acquired a reputation for robust impatience with red tape and waffle. She developed an almost passionate admiration for Douglas Hurd



Agnelli: loses patience with red tape and waffle

when he was Foreign Secretary, seeing him as the archetypal Italophile English gentleman.

Some diplomats find her forceful style refreshing, but others are worried by her open dislike of long and "tedious" detailed EU discussions. Spanish officials in particular complain that Signora Agnelli paid only a flying visit to Madrid just before Christmas to "pick up the baton" of the EU presidency. Spain fears that after the achievements of the Madrid summit last month, including agreements on EU enlargement and the single currency timetable, Signor Dini and Signora Agnelli will let the EU agenda slip.

Carlos Westendorp, Spain's new Foreign Minister, said at the weekend that Italy and Spain had a shared interest in ensuring that relations between the "hard core" countries joining a single currency and those left outside it were properly regulated.

"To have a single currency with different conditions would be a catastrophe for us all," Señor Westendorp said.



General de Gaulle broadcasts to occupied France from the BBC World Service studios in London in 1941

'Voice of liberty' is silenced by costs and changing tastes

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN PARIS

THE French language service of the BBC, which sustained France during the darkest hours of the Second World War, was silent yesterday for the first time in more than half a century, a victim of budget cuts and changing tastes.

Established in 1938, French broadcasts by the BBC World Service became *la voix de la liberté* to many in France and a potent symbol of resistance to Nazi occupation.

The decision to scrap the service coincided with new laws limiting the amount of British and American pop music that can be broadcast by French stations.

The BBC played a key role in stiffening French resolve during the war. On June 18, 1940, de Gaulle, speaking from the BBC studios in London, called on the French people to stand firm against the German occupiers, and on the eve of D-Day the service broadcast the famous line by the poet Paul Verlaine, *Les sanglots longs des violons de l'automne* ("the long sobs of autumnal violins"), a coded message that liberation was imminent.

However, with French audiences dwindling and widely dispersed, the BBC has ruled that the service is no longer economically viable. The World Service must cut costs by £6 million this year in line with Foreign Office budget restrictions. The BBC "greatly regretted the necessity of this decision", Andrew Taussig,

head of the BBC European Region, said.

French commentators yesterday paid tribute to *"La Beeb"*. The day de Gaulle broadcast his message of hope and determination, the BBC "became part of French history", said André Gillois, a wartime broadcaster.

At midnight on Sunday, just as the BBC ceased broadcasting to the French people, a new law came into force requiring French radio stations to ensure that at least 40 per cent of all pop songs broadcast are in French. The law is aimed at nurturing the French pop industry, defending French against English and rolling back what some see as an encroaching tide of Anglo-American culture.

Many music industry analysts admit, however, that there is hardly enough good French pop music to meet the new requirements. "We are going to have to broadcast mediocre stuff," Gérard Louvin, president of the radio station Voltage FM, said.

Others point out that French pop music is less successful than the Anglo-American variety because, for the most part, it is considerably worse. Listeners anxious to escape banal French pop music still have one recourse: as one newspaper noted yesterday: "The French will still be able to hear broadcasts by the Beeb ... in English".

Leading article, page 15

Denmark tries to revive city of culture

FROM CHRISTOPHER FOLLETT IN COPENHAGEN

LAUNCHED with a huge firework display, Copenhagen entered the new year as Europe's 1996 capital of culture and embarked on a campaign to revive the city and make it the hub of a dynamic new region at the mouth of the Baltic.

The 800-year-old Danish capital with its relaxed provincial charm seems affluent to tourists. However, the home of about one million people has in recent decades become more of an administrative centre: new industry has been moving out to the provinces, leaving the central and harbour areas to decay.

An exodus to the suburbs has meant falling population and decreasing tax revenue, pushing the city deep into debt when more money is needed to tackle high levels of crime and drug problems.

The capital of culture project has a one billion kroner (£115 million) budget, with 600 events planned involving more than 50,000 people. About 100 visiting projects will include displays of paintings by Picasso and Rembrandt, an Islamic exhibition, music festivals, ballet, theatre and modern dance. The Royal Danish Ballet will perform a new *Hamlet* rock ballet beside the moat of Elsinore Castle.

Greeks postpone talks on succession

FROM MALCOLM BRABANT IN ATHENS

GREEKS celebrated the new year yesterday in Athens' Constitution Square, but the spectacular firework display was overshadowed by continuing uncertainty over Andreas Papandreu, the critically ill Prime Minister.

Optimists had expected that the end of the festive period would see George Papandreu's eldest son, as the Education Minister, walking into his father's suite in the Onassis Heart Centre and emerging later with a document announcing the Prime Minister's resignation.

However, nothing is that simple under the Byzantine and, critics say, totalitarian way in which Mr Papandreu, 76, runs his Panhellenic Socialist Movement (Pasek).

Despite claims by some doctors that the Prime Minister will never be fit enough to resume his duties, Pasok's executive bureau, has decided to postpone talks on the succession until January 20.

Miltiades Evert, the leader of the conservative New Democracy, has threatened to call a vote of no confidence against the Government on January 7 unless Pasok begins the process of succession.

In his new year message, President Stephanopoulos sent a clear signal to Pasok to replace Mr Papandreu.

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صحة من الأصل

Dangers facing Riyadh's rulers lie in the gap between myth and reality

Saudi Arabia is not a country, it is a family business. This observation by an Arab friend is as apt today as it was a decade ago, when he had just returned from listening to King Fahd brooding on the threats that surrounded his kingdom.

Perhaps only North Korea has politics as obscure as those of Saudi Arabia. Its rulers claim authority from tradition, and its critics frequently cast it as medieval, yet Saudi Arabia is a modern creation, just seven decades old, a product of the conquests of the Nejd tribal coalition of four-fifths of the Arabian Peninsula in the 1920s, a time before oil gave the region any special importance. Britain was not happy, not least because the Saudi warriors proceeded to annex two-thirds of the British-protected state of Kuwait.

The danger facing Saudi Arabia today is that, with all the differ-



Its rulers claim their authority from tradition and critics cast it as medieval, yet Saudi Arabia is a modern creation, writes Fred Halliday

ences of time and ideology, it will go the way of its first friend, the Soviet Union. It is not so much external military threat or internal revolt but a combination of sclerosis among the aged men who rule it and the challenges of a new educated middle class that will bring the Saudi story to an end. For all its claims to Islamic rectitude, the state itself is a modern one, financed by oil, armed and guaranteed by America and deploying a contemporary form of religious intolerance to quell opponents.

Yet, while it holds a quarter of the world's oil reserves, it is not a rich,

but a middle-income country. Per capita earnings are around £3,900, employment for the educated is becoming increasingly hard to find, and there is widespread resentment about the corruption of the many princes of the royal house.

Women may be contained and coerced, but they are as aware as anyone of the gap between Saudi myth and Saudi reality, and between that reality and the outside world. Saudi concern with public opinion is clear from the efforts they put into censorship at home and abroad. With an elite that enjoys its international shopping

trips, videos, luxury cars and whisky as much as anyone, Saudi Arabia now faces a persistent challenge that no shuffles at the top, or invocations of Islamic tradition, can dispel.

For decades the country was able to use its oil wealth to insulate itself from outside challenge: its neighbours on the peninsula, from Kuwait to Yemen, knew what the sword on the Saudi flag portended, while the Saudi rulers, strong in their verbal support for the Islamic cause in Palestine, were careful to keep out of involvement in the five Arab-Israeli wars. The oil boom of the early 1970s appeared to justify reliance on "oil power", but events after 1973, when the oil price was quadrupled, have shown the limits of such power.

In 1977, Anwar Sadat, the late Egyptian leader, broke Arab ranks and sought a direct peace with Israel. In 1979 the Saudis woke up

to find in Iran a new, more militant Islamic rival across the waters of the Gulf. Saudi influence in Washington, the cornerstone of its foreign policy, was weakened in the 1980s and, from 1982, the price of oil began its long decline.

All this appeared to change when Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in August 1990. But the victory over Iraq, while a welcome respite for the Saudi family, brought its own problems: costs of up to \$70 billion (£45 billion), renewed conflict with populous Yemen, pressure from Washington to normalise relations with Israel, and a growing nationalist and Islamist opposition within the country itself. Many in the Saudi elite now argue that Kuwait is not worth defending, and that they should make their peace with Saddam. Fahd's 1993 creation of a consultative council did little to

assuage critics. Perhaps the greatest political asset the monarch retains is the negative example of what has occurred all around, in Iran, Iraq and the Horn of Africa.

As with the Soviet bureaucracy, there are signs among the Saudi rulers of divided opinion, and the long period of uncertainty associated with Fahd's recent years has compounded these divisions. Crown Prince Abdullah, nominated to rule on an interim basis, is believed to be more nationalist and less pro-American than the "Sudairi Seven", the seven sons of King Ibn Saud's favourite wife Sudairi. He is also known to have good relations with the regime in Syria, and may well feel strengthened by the rift that has opened up between Tehran and Damascus over Israel. But he is unlikely, given the collective pressures to which he, too, is subject, to take bold initiatives. The problem of change is

compounded by the variety of opposition opinion within the country. The Shia of the Eastern Province appear for the moment to have been won over by concessions from the ruling family. The liberal, somewhat more secular, middle class wants gradual opening up, but not if this means civil war or Islamist rule.

The Islamists appear to want a replacement of the Saudi family as a whole. There is also much sinister rhetoric in their proclamations. The family is not about to go out of operation; the business, however, may be in considerable trouble.

□ Fred Halliday is Professor of International Relations at the London School of Economics. He is the author of *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation* to be published on January 16 (L.B. Tauris, £12.95)

Secretive family holds the key to Arabia's stability

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

THE House of Saud is the richest, most extensive and most secretive ruling dynasty in the world. On it depends the stability of Arabia and the Gulf, the security of the world's oil reserves and the custody of the two Islamic holy cities that are sacred to more than a billion Muslims all over the world.

The royal descendants of Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, the puritan warrior from central Arabia who united the peninsula 70 years ago, number in their thousands. All the top jobs in the kingdom are controlled by the ageing sons of the revered monarch, or his grandsons. Although King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz recently announced the appointment of technocrats in the most thorough Government shake-up for 20 years, the levers of power — the army, intelligence services, home and foreign affairs ministries — remain firmly in the family's hands.

Yesterday's announcement is the first clear confirmation that the stroke suffered by King Fahd last month was more extensive and debilitating than previously announced, and that the line of succession has been firmly

THE HOUSE OF SAUD

established and will not be allowed to become a cause of friction within the family. Although he has laid down his mandate only temporarily and has not abdicated, there is little confidence in Saudi Arabia that he will resume the throne.

By tribal tradition, the succession has, since the death of Ibn Saud, passed from one of his 44 sons to the next, rather than by primogeniture. But a family conclave has to endorse the succession. The first king, Saud, was forced to abdicate after a reign of profligacy; the throne passed in 1964 to the greatest so far of all Saudi

monarchs, King Faisal, who was the man more than any other who brought Saudi Arabia into the modern world and laid the foundations of an oil-financed welfare state.

His two sons, both well educated and articulate, hold key positions in Saudi Arabia today: Prince Saud al-Faisal is the Foreign Minister, and his brother Prince Turki heads the intelligence service. If the succession is ever to skip a generation, Prince Saud is the stronger contender.

After King Faisal's assassination, the throne went to King Khalid. But he was in poor health; King Fahd held the job of Prime Minister and took over on his brother's death. Two of his younger brothers hold key positions: Prince Sultan bin Abdul Aziz, next in line after Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, is the Defence Minister, and Prince Salman bin Abdul Aziz is Governor of Riyadh.

Prince Sultan's two sons also hold key appointments: Prince Khalid was the commander-in-chief of Saudi forces during the Gulf war, and his brother, Prince Bandar, is Saudi Ambassador to Washington.

There has been widespread speculation over rivalries between the princes. It has been suggested that King Fahd has tried to freeze out Prince Abdullah and has more trust in Prince Sultan. But as one member of the family said: "Outsiders forget that this is a family. They meet frequently. They do not suddenly threaten to turn the National Guard on each other."

What unites the entire ruling family is the Wahhabi brand of fundamentalist Islam: King Fahd has proclaimed himself the "Custodian of the Two Holy Cities" and it is this title that is paramount. Religion is strictly controlled and enforced, with restrictions on Christian wor-



Crown Prince Abdullah leading the Saudi team at a Gulf Arab Co-operation Council summit in Oman last month

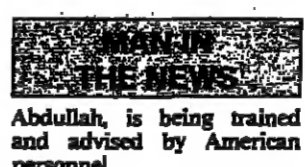
Prince intolerant of dissent

By MICHAEL BINYON

PRINCE ABDULLAH, at 71 two years younger than King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz, is likely to be less overtly pro-Western than his brother. He is closer to the Islamic establishment in Saudi Arabia and more critical of the West, Israel and Western interests in the Middle East.

This is unlikely to lead to any changes in Saudi foreign policy, which is governed by caution, discretion, pragmatism and a preference for quiet diplomacy rather than public pronouncements.

However, it may lead to a slight distancing from Saudi Arabia's close involvement with America, even though the 77,000-strong National Guard, fiercely loyal to Prince



Abdullah, is being trained and advised by American personnel. Prince Abdullah has a reputation for greater personal probity than his younger brother Sultan. He is also intolerant of dissent, and may make greater use of the Guard to round up dissidents, crack down on pro-Iranian fundamentalists and uphold religious strictures which are already zealously enforced by the *Mutawaa* religious police. His most difficult task will be to bring the economy back into balance. The 1996 budget, published yesterday, will maintain a spending freeze while the world's largest oil

exporter tackles economic hardships caused by a drop in world oil prices and the huge costs of the 1991 Gulf War.

The new 150 billion riyal (£25.9 billion) budget is forecast an 18.5 billion riyal deficit in 1996, compared to a forecast 15 billion riyal shortfall in 1995. The budget was published after discussion by the Cabinet during its weekly session.

Prince Abdullah will remain as secluded and secretive as his brothers, handicapped by a stutter and a reserved manner. He has a strong rapport with the Bedouin, however, and is likely to be more energetic in restoring self-confidence to the kingdom which has clearly been unsettled by recent internal and external challenges.

Algerian President promotes diplomat to Prime Minister

FROM REUTER IN PARIS

PRESIDENT ZEROUAL of Algeria has appointed a skillful negotiator, Ahmed Ouyahia, as Prime Minister to replace Mokdad Sifi, who becomes a state minister.

Mr Ouyahia, a 43-year-old career diplomat, was the President's head of Cabinet from early 1994 after Mr Zeroual was appointed as head of state, a position he consolidated in Algeria's first multi-candidate presidential election on November 16.

The new Prime Minister won a reputation as a skillful negotiator when he brokered a 1993 peace accord that ended warfare in neighbouring Mali between its Government and Tuareg guerrillas seeking more autonomy.

Mr Ouyahia took over on Sunday evening after an official ceremony in the government headquarters. The new Prime Minister also held talks with his predecessor.

Political sources said Mr Zeroual had earlier entrusted Mr Ouyahia with carrying out several rounds of dialogue with opposition parties, which had given him experience of Algeria's complicated political arena and the aspirations of Muslim fundamentalists.

It was Mr Ouyahia who last July briefed local journalists on failed negotiations between leaders of the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)

and the presidency, which were held to try to end four years of violence in which an estimated 50,000 people have died.

The departing Prime Minister was among the rare holders of that office to win recognition even from opposition parties for his Government's performance in reshaping a crippled economy and holding the country's first multi-candidate presidential election. The poll attracted a huge turnout despite Muslim guerrilla threats to kill voters.

Diplomats and analysts said they believed that Mr Ouyahia's appointment was aimed at underlining Mr Zeroual's commitment to hold parliamentary elections in the next six months and to continue talks with the opposition, including the jailed FIS leaders.

Mr Zeroual had promised to encourage young people to take part in political life, including top positions. Mr Ouyahia was widely expected to carry on Mr Zeroual's programme of economic reforms and reshaping Algeria's institutions through multiparty elections.

Under Algeria's constitution, the President holds huge powers, leaving the Prime Minister with a largely executive and management role to carry out his policy.

Mixed signals as Israel and Syria prepare for new talks

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

ISRAELI and Syrian negotiators resume talks on a secluded estate near Washington tomorrow amid conflicting reports on what they achieved last week.

Simon Peres, Israel's Prime Minister, told his Cabinet there had been "understandings reached with the Syrian representatives on a number of issues", but Ehud Barak, the Foreign Minister, offered a meeting of Israeli settlers on the Golan Heights a more guarded assessment. He said

the two sides "had yet to begin to talk about substance and it would take more time to know whether there is a partner to negotiate with".

Walid Mualeem, the Syrian Ambassador to Washington who heads his country's negotiating team, said the atmosphere was better and the three-day talks more serious than the previous negotiations that collapsed six months ago, but "no final understanding was reached on any of the subjects discussed".

The two sides had "discussed with clarity and seriousness a number of issues, but the matters are still not settled... The talks were useful, but they are still exploratory."

The Clinton Administration has convened the talks at the Wye Plantation, a conference centre on Maryland's eastern shore, an hour's drive from Washington. In the hope that the informal atmosphere will lubricate the stalled negotiations between two of the

Middle East's most implacable foes.

An Israeli-Syrian accord is the key to a comprehensive Middle East peace settlement, but the two nations have been unable to agree terms for an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

Iran has meanwhile attacked Syria, its main Arab ally, for seeking peace with Israel. Over the weekend All Akbar Velayati, Iran's Foreign Minister, accused Syria of "humiliating itself", and

Hassan Habibi, Iran's Vice-President, is said to have cancelled a trip to Syria.

Iran also said yesterday that it would protest to the United Nations and the World Court if the US Congress approved a \$20 million (£13 million) covert action fund being sought by Newt Gingrich, the House Speaker, to destabilise the Tehran Government.

In June the United States imposed a trade and investment embargo on Iran, and Mr Gingrich has urged Presi-

dent Clinton to approve the covert action programme, even though the CIA is unsure how to spend the money.

□ Cairo Islamic militants put President Mubarak of Egypt at the top of their hit-list for 1996.

The Gamaa al-Islamiya said it had killed two policemen, including a lieutenant-colonel, and a passer-by "just hours before the end of 1995" and its priority for the new year was "to liquidate" the Egyptian leader. (AFP)



AN AERIAL view of 18,740 chairs placed next to the Tel Aviv-Haifa motorway yesterday to represent the number of people killed in traffic accidents in Israel since 1948 (Bill Hutman writes). The figure is more than the number of Israelis killed in military conflicts. Yesterday

Campaigning for safety

a one-day campaign was held in the country to reduce the number of road accident casualties. "The fact is that the major cause of accidents in this country is bad driving," Moshe Shahal, the

Internal Security Minister, said at a press conference to launch the campaign. Patrol cars were out in force aided by helicopters on the lookout for reckless drivers. One police district reported that

it had run out of traffic tickets because so many were issued. The campaign appeared to have worked. Only 13 road accidents were reported in Israel yesterday compared with more than 80 on an average day in the country, which has a population of nearly five million.

EU chides Arafat for flouting electoral laws

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

EUROPEAN monitors yesterday criticised Yasser Arafat for bypassing election laws, including shortening the campaign for the Palestinian elections.

Carl Lidbom, the head of European Union's Electoral Unit, issued a statement expressing concerns about developments affecting the elections due later this month. He highlighted the decision of the Palestinian Authority to shorten the campaign period from 22 to 14 days "without explanation".

He said it was a matter of regret that Mahmud Abbas, the chairman of the Palestinian Central Election Commission, had not seen fit to discuss such matters with the EU

election monitors. Mr Lidbom said he would have raised the question of why Mr Arafat, the chairman of both the Palestinian Authority and the Palestine Liberation Organisation, was allowed to issue presidential decrees affecting the elections, including increasing the number of seats in the Legislative Assembly.

The events of the past few days have created confusion and uncertainty, and give the impression of the arbitrary use of power to redesign the electoral architecture," he said.

"The European Electoral Unit believes that the series of improvisations and irregularities should now cease if the elections are to retain any credibility."

Sarajevo resounds with gunfire and explosions as Bosnia celebrates peace at start of year

Peking calls for new co-operation over Hong Kong

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

CHINA'S top official handling Hong Kong affairs hailed 1996 with a call for a new dawn in Sino-British ties in the 18 months before the handover of the territory.

This year would be the most important in the transition to the return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty on July 1, 1997, Lu Ping, the director of China's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office, said.

"I am looking forward to a new dawn appearing in Sino-British co-operation on the issue of Hong Kong," Mr Lu said. He repeated criticism of

Britain for "creating many obstacles to the stable transition of Hong Kong and smooth transfer of power".

A visit to Peking next week by Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, would see new progress, with the issue of Hong Kong expected to top the agenda, Mr Lu said.

President Jiang Zemin dominated the Chinese front pages on New Year's Day, in a clear reminder that he starts 1996 as the designated successor to Deng Xiaoping.

About 3,000 Chinese climbed a section of the Great

Wall outside Peking as part of a campaign to promote outdoor sports and physical fitness. The organisers, including the Chinese Mountaineering Association, had hoped to attract 10,000 climbers.

In Sarajevo the new year was greeted with heavy bursts of machinegun fire, tracers and explosions, but for the first time since the spring of 1992 the shooting was in joy, not anger.

For several minutes before and after midnight, tracers and flares lit up the sky around the city to mark the start of 1996, but the shooting was aimed harmlessly into the air rather than across the frontlines. Most residents stayed indoors at private parties. Loud music echoed through deserted streets with taxis ferrying people from one celebration to another.

Nato's peacekeeping force, monitoring the recently signed peace agreement, was not pleased by the traditional outpouring of Balkan emberance. A spokesman said that people could be harmed and said he regretted that appeals for restraint had been ignored.

Elsewhere around the world new year celebrations were marked by violence, including deaths by stray bullets and fireworks, and hundreds of accidents.

In the Philippines at least 11 people were killed and 700



Some of the 3,000 Chinese who climbed part of the Great Wall near Peking on New Year's Day in a campaign to promote sport and health

KwaZulu toll rises

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

A FURTHER 20 people have been murdered in KwaZulu-Natal as a year that claimed close to 1,000 victims came to an end. More than 200 have been killed since Christmas.

The latest toll came yesterday despite government pledges to step up security in the most volatile areas. This followed the massacre of 19 people on Christmas Day. They were attacked near the holiday resort of Port Shepstone by an impi of up to 600 supporters of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom Party of Chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi.

In Johannesburg, police fired rubber bullets as new year celebrations turned into chaos. Five people were injured, three critically, as bottles, plant pots and even a settler were hurled from flats.

In a new year message President Mandela referred to the Government's proposals to privatise some state assets, including the national airline and parts of the post office, which threaten to set off intensive industrial unrest and a showdown between the African National Congress and its major alliance partner, the Congress of South African Trade Unions.

South Africa laughs at itself

FROM INIGO GILMORE IN JOHANNESBURG

MILLIONS of people across South Africa are being drawn together through laughter, thanks to a new sitcom that pokes fun at the absurdity of racial prejudice.

In less than two months, *Suburban Bliss* has rocketed to the top of the television ratings, stirring passions in bars and on talk shows. The first cross-racial sitcom bravely runs the gamut of racial stereotypes from musical tastes to crime and domestic servants — and after only a handful of episodes the rainbow nation is hooked.

Viewers have been introduced to two families — the white Dwyers and black Moloi — who become neighbours in one of Johannesburg's formerly white suburbs. Fresh out of Soweto, Ike Moloi is the epitome of the upwardly mobile black who



Seputha Sebogodi as Ike, the yuppie from Soweto

has to contend with a preppy wife, Billy and Kobie Dwyer, an Afrikaner couple, employ Mr Moloi in their furniture company. Billy's father, Hempiers, an unashamed racist, is horrified by "those people" living so close and loses control when he learns Ike has been given a 20

per cent stake in the business. The hardest-hitting lines are reserved for Hempiers Dwyer and his foil Ma Moloi, the unfappable African grandmother, who trade racial insults over the garden fence. "You bloody racist baboon," she spits when Afrikanerdom's answer to Alf Garnett calls her a "Pondo (tribal name) pygmy".

Gray Hofmeyr, 46, the creator and executive producer, says: "It is a kind of release mechanism to be able to laugh at ourselves. People have never heard this kind of thing on South African television before. After all these years, they are pleased to find it all so funny."

In one episode, the two wives simultaneously decide to employ maids: Kobie goes out of her way to impress upon her new employee that she is not racist while Ike's materialistic wife, Thando, delights in being called "madam". In the

new year's episode, Hempiers erects 40 yards of razor wire along the garden fence and sits in his yard, rifle across his lap, peering through binoculars for intruders from the Moloi's boisterous party.

Motshabi Tyelele, 27, Thando's real-life alter ego, chuckles when she reflects how the humour gets so close to the bone: she had dreamt of having a white maid during her upbringing in Soweto. "The danger of this country is racial labelling — blacks are called thieves and criminals, whites are racists and so on. The question is how do you break the walls down? I think humour can remove some of the bricks."

Alicia Luvuno, 19, a university student and self-confessed *Bliss* addict, says the show "exposes the way we relate to each other. It makes people talk because they can relate to it. We must get prejudice out of our system."

Nigeria frees aide to Abiola

Lagos Nigeria's military authorities have freed another senior aide to Chief Moshood Abiola, the detained presidential claimant, according to local newspapers. They said Ademola Adeniji-Adele, held without trial for 17 months in the northern city of Kaduna, was freed last Saturday and was expected to return to his Lagos home tomorrow.

He is the third aide of Chief Abiola, the undeclared winner of the annulled 1993 presidential election, to be freed since pressure on the Government to release political detainees was stepped up last November after nine minority rights activists were hanged.

Ken Saro-Wiwa, the writer, who was one of the nine, was yesterday named man of the year by the independent Nigerian press. "Ken Saro-Wiwa single-handedly shook this nation, even in death," the *Guardian* said. "For this alone, 1995 belongs to him." (Reuters)

Indonesia hit by earthquake

Jakarta: An earthquake measuring 7.0 on the Richter scale shook Indonesia's Sulawesi island, destroying wooden houses and triggering tidal waves and aftershocks.

Officials said that the extent of damage along a remote isthmus in central Sulawesi, was unlikely to be known until today because of poor communications. There were no immediate reports of loss of life but at least 21 homes were damaged. (Reuters)

Firing squads kept busy

Peking: Firing squads drawn from the People's Armed Police were busy in the final weeks of 1995 and the situation is unlikely to change (James Pringle writes). About a third of all criminal offences are punishable by death. Observers believe that between 1,400 and 1,500 people a year are executed, and China carries out about 60 per cent of the world's legal executions.

No sex please we're Kenyan

Nairobi: President Moi of Kenya banned a family planning book published by the Girl Guides Association of America as immoral and promoting promiscuity because it talks about sex, the *Daily Nation* reported. He issued a warning about the dangers of over-population. (Reuters)

American nuclear 'swat' team emerges from the shadows

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

DETAILS are emerging about a secretive American government agency that maintains 1,000 specialists on 24-hour stand-by to respond to the threat of nuclear terrorism.

The Nuclear Emergency Search Team — Nest — keeps its own aircraft at bases outside Las Vegas and Washington DC, and can put a rapid response unit anywhere in the country within four hours.

The plainclothes "swat" teams track down nuclear devices with radiation sensors inside briefcases, and are controlled from a command post inside an ordinary mini-van. The Nest agents are linked to the White House, Pentagon, CIA, FBI and State Department over a communications network known as "Poison Promise".

Disposal experts, who train by building and dismantling their own homemade nuclear bombs, can deactivate any device by surrounding them with super-hard "containment foam" and then defusing them.

New headed by a glamorous blonde named Lisa Gordon-Hagerly, Nest was created inside the US Energy Department in 1975 after terrorists threatened to set off a nuclear device in Boston if they did not receive a \$200,000 (£130,000) ransom.

The agency has been placed on alert 110 times and actually mobilised 30 times, although all the incidents turned out to be hoaxes.

In her first press interview, Ms Gordon-Hagerly recently told *The Washington Times*

that the staff of Nest — most of whom are civilian volunteers from the nuclear power industry — were America's "unsung heroes".

Discussing the threat of a nuclear terrorist attack, Ms Gordon-Hagerly said: "I think more in terms of when, not if." With more radioactive material finding its way onto the open market since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Congress is now considering a sizeable increase in Nest's annual budget of about \$40 million.

If it all sounds like the stuff of Hollywood, it may well soon be so. *The Hollywood Reporter* said last month that a screenplay entitled *First Strike*, about a Nest agent called out of retirement to locate a stolen nuclear missile, had sold for \$200,000.



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Dole takes the lead in race for money

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

NOT one primary vote has yet been cast, but Robert Dole's grip on the Republican presidential nomination is reflected both in the opinion polls and in his seemingly effortless ability to raise money.

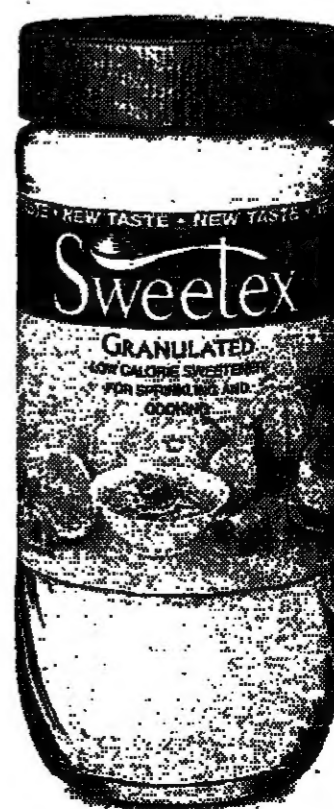
New figures show that the Senate majority leader raised \$5.7 million (£3.65 million), more than double the amount collected by his rivals in the final quarter of 1995. Phil Gramm, the Texas senator who has described ready money as "the most reliable friend you can have in American politics", raised \$1.9 million. Lamar Alexander, the former Tennessee Governor, received \$1.5 million.

Indeed, the two men considered likely to be Mr Dole's main challengers, raised even less than Pat Buchanan, the conservative commentator who collected \$2.3 million.

No figures have been released for Steve Forbes, the publishing tycoon, since he is financing his own campaign. He is thought to have spent more than \$7 million in the past three months and has jumped into second place in the polls as a result of saturation advertising.

Mr Dole's overwhelming war-chest gives him a huge advantage in a primary season that is compressed into a mere six weeks by California's unusually early contest. From the moment Iowa holds its caucus and New Hampshire conducts its primary next month, candidates will have no time left for fundraising.

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FEEL FREE TO BE SUGAR FREE IN '96

Edwards inspires victory to make Leeds's pursuit an impossible dream

Dominant Wigan carry off trophy in all but name

Warrington 12
Wigan 41

By Christopher Irvine

IT IS only right that a championship trophy that Wigan have now won on 17 occasions since it was first awarded to Broughton Rangers in 1902 should reside permanently at Central Park, a potent symbol of the sport's most successful club in a worthy and predictable conclusion in a first century of rugby league.

Eight of those championships have been achieved in a decade of overwhelming superiority and professionalism that is embodied by the slight but mercurial figure of Shaun Edwards.

With ten minutes remaining of a game at Widdows yesterday that Wigan had comfortably wrapped up, along with an unofficial sev-

enth successive Stones Championship — Leeds's interest is merely national at this stage — Edwards waved away calls to take him off. Not on a day he was appointed OBE. In a typical riposte to pinpoint kicks, he levered open a hapless Warrington defence for Va'anga Tuigamala to plunder his second and third tries.

Wigan have been a team beyond compare throughout the 1990s and Edwards the inspiration at the heart of each success. A sharpness of mind and limb marked him out at an early age, and explained the clock-and-dagger procedure behind his signing in

1983 by Wigan, at midnight on his seventeenth birthday. Now 29, there is still no more shrewd or skilled an orchestrator.

For all that Mike Ford, an old adversary and former team-mate, battled manfully for Warrington in a muddy and occasionally bloody confrontation, Edwards was exquisite in the second half, even poaching a try and squeezing over a dropped goal.

Receipt by Edwards of an unprecedented eighth championship-winner's medal, Wigan's £75,000 cheque and custody of the trophy will come later. While Leeds can boast a minute chance, the adornment of cherry-and-white ribbons must stay in their wrapping.

However, in a game ruled by the cold doses of reality administered by Wigan, the mathematics of Leeds making up a deficit of 295 points on the leaders in two matches, including a final-day visit to Central Park on January 21, is as near an impossibility as it could be.

To all intents and purposes, the race, such as it was, petered out weeks ago. The transitional century season has been a misguided and wastefully congested affair. But, as Graeme West, the Wigan coach, pointed out, it remained to be won. There was no shirking in Wigan's approach.

In ringing in the new year with the old, old story, Wigan's celebrations will be necessary brief. The start of rugby league's challenging second century finds 1996 as the year of fresh horizons, new peaks to be scaled in the move to spring and summer, coupled with the infinitely greater task of measuring up against the best that Australia can offer from its own Super League. Predict-

ability, for all Wigan's greatness, makes for a tired script. On the domestic front, there are genuinely exciting developments at Warrington, Bradford and St Helens which bode well. The threat to Wigan's dominance is still some way off, but seems to be gathering strength.

Wigan, too, are longing to stretch their legs on firmer pitches. Yet, on a soft-crusted top at Widdows yesterday, they were still indomitable. Having kept pace until just before half-time, with Ford's

vision and Sculthorpe's trickery supplying Foster with a score in reply to Haughton's opening try for the visitors, Warrington lost the plot completely once Tuigamala crashed past Barrow from a well-drilled scrum move.

Warrington, with thoughts drifting to their Regal Trophy semi-final at St Helens on Thursday, raised the white flag as Smyth, Robinson and Edwards raced clear for touchdowns in the space of eight minutes. Barrow replied with one before Edwards's

boot and Tuigamala's irrepressible finishing for his first hat-trick completed another stylish victory.

SCORERS: Warrington: Tries: Foster, Barrow, Goats, Knott, Ford, Wigan: Tuigamala, R. Smyth, Robinson, Smyth, Edwards, Goats; Paul (5), Hall (dropped goal), Edwards.

WARRINGTON: 1. Perry (sub. Knott, 65min); 2. Foster, 3. Barrow, 4. Goats, 5. Paul (5), 6. Hall (dropped goal), 7. Edwards, 8. Knott, 9. Ford, 10. Wigan: 1. Tuigamala, 2. R. Smyth, 3. Robinson, 4. Smyth, 5. Edwards, 6. Goats, 7. Paul (5), 8. Hall, 9. O'Connor, 10. S. Gurnell, 11. Cassidy (sub. A. Johnson, 64), 12. S. Haughton. Referee: S. Priestley.



The Warrington defence is stretched to the limit as Terry O'Connor tries to burst through

Schofield forces delay to title party plans

HOURS after Wigan put the destiny of the Stones Championship beyond reasonable doubt, Leeds made sure of a delay in the official presentation by breaking an eight-year losing sequence at St Helens in a 30-14 victory yesterday (Christopher Irvine writes).

Wigan would have to take a spectacular nose-dive to throw away the title but the spirit shown at Knowles Road has encouraged Leeds that they can see out the end of the truncated season unbeaten.

Garry Schofield opened the

Leeds account with a try. Indeed, the scrum half was the architect of a nervous victory, as Scott Gibbs added to an earlier touchdown by Karl Hammond. Mick Shaw had kept the home side at bay when he followed Craig Innes and Carl Hall over in the second half.

Halfback overcame Bradford Bulls 22-18 in their re-arranged match at Huddersfield and Sheffield Eagles stretched their winning League run in a 42-12 success at Castleford.

England look to McKinney

MUCH will be expected of Ian McKinney in Copenhagen over the next two nights when the 23-year-old playmaker from Sheffield Sharks makes his debut for England (Nicholas Harling writes).

McKinney, a late selection, has the chance of establishing himself in Laszlo Nemeth's squad for the forthcoming European championship ties if he can do for his country what he does so well for his club. The Budweiser League champions, "What we need at international level is a consistent three-point shooter,"

Nemeth said. "Others have been tried but have failed. Ian could be the answer."

Nemeth is not too concerned that the Dines might reinforce their team in one of the games with two Americans, thus rendering it an unofficial international. "I don't object as, the stronger the opposition, the better it is for us," the England coach said.

Beaten 88-70 by England in the European qualifying tournament at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) in Birmingham last May, Denmark should provide satisfac-

tory opponents this time for England, who will also meet Hungary twice next month before the daunting European championship visit to Moscow on February 28.

Some clubs have been upset by the timing of this week's games, however, hearing in mind a full Budweiser League programme next weekend.

ENGLAND: N. Austin (London Towers), S. Blackwell (London Towers), A. Gardner (London Towers), R. Baller (London Towers), J. Brown (Leeds), J. Whyte (Leeds), S. Baker (Birmingham Bulls), T. Gordon (Birmingham Bulls), M. Payne (Birmingham Bulls), P. O'Grady (Manchester Giants), R. Hughes (Sheffield), J. McGinley (Sheffield Sharks), P. Scudliffe (Sheffield Sharks).

Croats too strong for France

CROATIA, the favourites, made short work of beating France in the Hopman Cup tennis tournament in Perth, Australia yesterday. Iva Majoli and Goran Ivanisevic completed straight-sets victories over Catherine Tanvier and Arnaud Boetsch respectively to seal a 2-0 win for their country in the group A round-robin match.

Ivanisevic took just 72 minutes to clinch his 7-5, 6-4 victory over Boetsch after Majoli had cruised to a comfortable 6-1, 6-2 win. But Ivanisevic's victory came in

uncharacteristic style with none of his usual big services or aces.

Majoli, playing in the cup for the first time, did not have to exert herself against Tanvier. The Frenchwoman, still recovering from surgery on her right knee, hobbled around the court gingerly throughout the 64-minute match and never looked in contention.

Earlier, the United States, seeded fifth, had produced the first upset of the tournament, beating the highly-fancied South Africans 2-1. Richey

Reneberg bounced back in style to beat Wayne Ferreira, the world No.9, 6-2, 6-2 to bring the match level at 1-1 after his partner, Chanda Rubin, had lost 6-2, 6-4 to Amanda Coetzer in her singles match.

In the deciding mixed doubles clash, Reneberg and Rubin kept their cool to overcome Ferreira and Coetzer 7-5, 6-3.

For the first time in eight years, the Hopman Cup has changed format. The early round-robin stages replace a former knockout structure.

Horner claims first

CYCLING: Andrew Horner, 19, of Willingham, Cambridgeshire, was the first winner of the new year yesterday when he recorded the fastest time in the CC Breckland ten-mile event, held on a course that had to be revised at short notice because of roadworks. He beat the former national champion, Martin Pyne, by six seconds with a time of 22min 26sec.

Relative success

REAL TENNIS: Peter and Tom Bromwich won the fathers and sons doubles championship at Leamington with an outstanding performance against Bernard and Paul Holland, dropping only one game against highly-rated opponents. Their overwhelming 6-1 victory puts them among the favourites for the national fathers and sons championship next week.

FOR THE RECORD

AMERICAN FOOTBALL

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NFL): Wild-card round: Green Bay 37 Atlanta 20, Indianapolis 35 San Diego 20. NEW ORLEANS: Sugar Bowl, Virginia Tech 28 Texas 10.

ATHLETICS

CROSS COUNTRY: Teaplow, Cleveland (100m), 1. K. Shah (Men 3000m), 2. A. Passey (GB) 26.51, 3. W. O'Connell (Ireland) 27.08. Women: 1. A. Wicks (Ireland) 20.02, 2. R. Naeff (Switzerland) 20.31, 3. H. Maguire (Ireland) 20.31. Loughborough Snipe Festival (5.5 miles), 1. G. Gaudin (France) 29:15, 2. R. Warrington (Ireland) 29:25, 3. C. Black (Ireland) 29:30. 10.0km, 1. C. Black (Ireland) 32:00, 2. R. Warrington (Ireland) 32:00, 3. C. Black (Ireland) 32:00.

CRICKET

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona: Anderson Consulting world championship. Semi-finals: 1. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 2. R. Warrington (Ireland) 3. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 4. R. Warrington (Ireland) 5. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 6. R. Warrington (Ireland) 7. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 8. R. Warrington (Ireland) 9. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 10. R. Warrington (Ireland) 11. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 12. R. Warrington (Ireland) 13. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 14. R. Warrington (Ireland) 15. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 16. R. Warrington (Ireland) 17. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 18. R. Warrington (Ireland) 19. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 20. R. Warrington (Ireland) 21. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 22. R. Warrington (Ireland) 23. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 24. R. Warrington (Ireland) 25. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 26. R. Warrington (Ireland) 27. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 28. R. Warrington (Ireland) 29. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 30. R. Warrington (Ireland) 31. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 32. R. Warrington (Ireland) 33. C. Blackwell (Ireland) 34. R. 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Promoting Hick may be key to ending stalemate



Hick: England's most powerful batsman

The fifth and final Test match which starts here today should be being played on one of South Africa's old matting pitches, those which took spin and had plenty of bounce. We would get a result then, and be assured of some lively cricket.

As it is, the prospect of the whole series ending in stalemate is obviously a real one. Test matches at Newlands are played on a rule, by a tour de force (eg. Johnny Wardle's 12 for 89 in 1956-57, bowling mostly googlies and chinamen) and, with their present attack, there is not a Test-playing country in the world that England could expect, with any confidence, to bowl out twice on a flat pitch.

India and Pakistan played 13 successive Tests against each other between December 1952 and November 1978 without getting a result, but that

was because, when either side lost, it was considered a national disaster. One of the few results between them was to come later on a newly-laid pitch in Karachi, and it could be relevant that today's pitch is a new one. The hope must be that it will give the bowlers the help they need to keep a game moving.

South Africa have half a dozen or more lavishly appointed grounds, lacking only the greatest need of all, a fast or interesting pitch. That is like having a handsome frame but a weak pulse, and the condition is certainly not peculiar to this country.

There are few grounds in the world, unfortunately, where one could go today and be sure of finding a pitch to produce an eventful match, especially one between two sides as understandably anxious not to lose as Hansie



John Woodcock recalls when South African Tests played on mats produced lively cricket

Cronje's and Michael Atherton's. In the ordinary way, I think, groundsman are inclined to lay too much stress on producing a pitch to last for five days, feeling perhaps that their reputations depend upon doing so, rather than something more "sporting". The recent Test match at Port Elizabeth would have been a better game had the pitch been a little less well-prepared. We have a groundsman here, though, who is very much his own man, and an overall situation calling for what in the trade is called a "result pitch".

Of England's 13 Test matches in 1995, all against stiff opposition (Australia, West Indies and South Africa), three were won, three lost and seven drawn, and that is not a record to be sniffed at, even if England were more often than not the side under pressure. The outstanding personal achievement of the year had to be Atherton's, not so much for his captaincy as for his courage and stamina, almost always under heavy fire. Alone, he held together one England innings after another.

He batted, all told, for 67 hours 3 minutes in Test cricket during 1995 and faced 3,095 balls, a good third of which would have been aimed at his head, travelling at something over 75mph. These are astonishing figures, the like of which can never have been remotely approached. The man's powers of concentration — in Sir Donald Bradman's opinion the *sine qua non* of high scoring — are incredible. But if England are to win this last Test match, they are likely to have to score faster than Atherton does, and the best way of achieving this might be to have Graeme Hick at No.3. Hick is the most powerful batsman in the side at the moment. There are times when, in its hauteur, his play has a strong look of Ted Dexter's, especially when he is hooking and driving — and Dexter was a great player.

I was sorry to hear yesterday that England were thinking of playing an extra bowler at the expense of a specialist batsman. It may smack of despair to say so, but virtually England's only chance of winning is on a helpful pitch, and if they find one of those, four bowlers will be enough and the extra batsman would be useful. I would have Hick at three and Mark Ramprakash at six. At Port Elizabeth, Jason Gallian, going in first wicket down, batted more like a crab than the stonemason he once was.

Australia saved by Bevan's last-ball boundary

By OUR SPORTS STAFF

MICHAEL BEVAN struck a boundary off the final ball of the game to condemn West Indies to a dramatic one-wicket defeat in the World Series Cup match against Australia in Sydney yesterday.

The New South Wales batsman, who will be the Yorkshire vice-captain next season, hammered Roger Harper, the off-spinner, for four off the last ball of a day-night match reduced to 43 overs because of rain. He remained unbeaten on 78 — his highest limited-overs international score — as Australia reached 173 for nine in reply to West Indies' 172 for nine.

Until Bevan's innings, Australia looked set for a crushing defeat to wreck their 100 per cent record in the fourth match after crashing to 38 for six in the sixth over.

Bevan, who has yet to be dismissed in four World Series innings, struck six boundaries in his 89-ball innings and shared in a vital eighth-wicket partnership of 83 with Paul Reiffel, the fast bowler, to lead Australia out of trouble and to within sight of victory. Reiffel, who also captured four wickets for 29, contributed 34.

As the match reached an exciting climax, Glenn McGrath scrambled a quick single to give Bevan the strike for the final two deliveries. He failed to score off the first of these balls before charging down the pitch to smash the last delivery to the boundary.

"It was a bit nerve-racking at the end," Bevan said. "We had needed a boundary for a while but the opportunity did not present itself until the last ball."

Mark Taylor, the Australia captain, said: "We did not really deserve to win because we were dead and buried at 38 for six but, thanks to Michael, we got home."

West Indies were earlier rescued from 34 for five by an unbeaten innings of 93 in 99 balls from Carl Hooper.

WEST INDIES

C Williams	5
S Campbell	1
P V Simmons	16
C Driessens	1
C Hooper	93
C Adams	0
C Gibson	0
C Brown	0
C Brindley	0
C Anderson	0
C Walsh	0
Eagles	10
Total (9 wickets)	172

FALL OF WICKETS 1-23, 2-32, 3-38, 4-54, 5-61, 6-70, 7-100, 8-104, 9-108.

BOWLING McGrath 9-20-1, Reiffel 9-20-1, Adams 6-20-0, Hooper 4-10-1.

AUSTRALIA

M Taylor	1
M Slater	0
P Siddle	0
R Poretti	0
G Lene	0
G Lene	0
S Loe	0
T A Healy	0
R Reiffel	0
S P Warner	0
G D McGrath	0
Bevan	89
Total (9 wickets)	173

FALL OF WICKETS 1-3, 2-15, 3-15, 4-32, 5-38, 6-38, 7-74, 8-107, 9-117.

BOWLING Anderson 9-20-3, Walsh 9-20-2, Gibson 6-20-0, Hooper 4-10-1.

Man of the match M A Taylor

Australia	1
South Africa	0
West Indies	0

South Africans fear opener's return to form

Stewart bounces back in the nick of time

FROM SIMON WILDE IN CAPE TOWN

IF ENGLAND'S Test series with South Africa is to be won and not drawn at Newlands this week, it is already clear that it will be fast bowling that decides the matter, as had been widely anticipated from the outset.

With England likely to play only five batsmen on what may be the liveliest pitch of the series — which is, admittedly, not saying much — there will be a special onus on all five of them to succeed, particularly the opening pair, who must hold at bay Allan Donald and the new ball.

Had Alec Stewart failed in the second innings at Port Elizabeth last week, Michael Atherton might have wanted to do this job with someone other than the man who has partnered him for much of the past two years, for Stewart was woefully in need of runs. Instead, he spent over 5½ hours at the crease to score a match-saving 81 and give another lease of life to his Test career.

Stewart's time in the Eng-

land side has rarely run smoothly. There have been concerns about whether his technique could cope with high-class fast bowling; whether he should open or play in the middle order.

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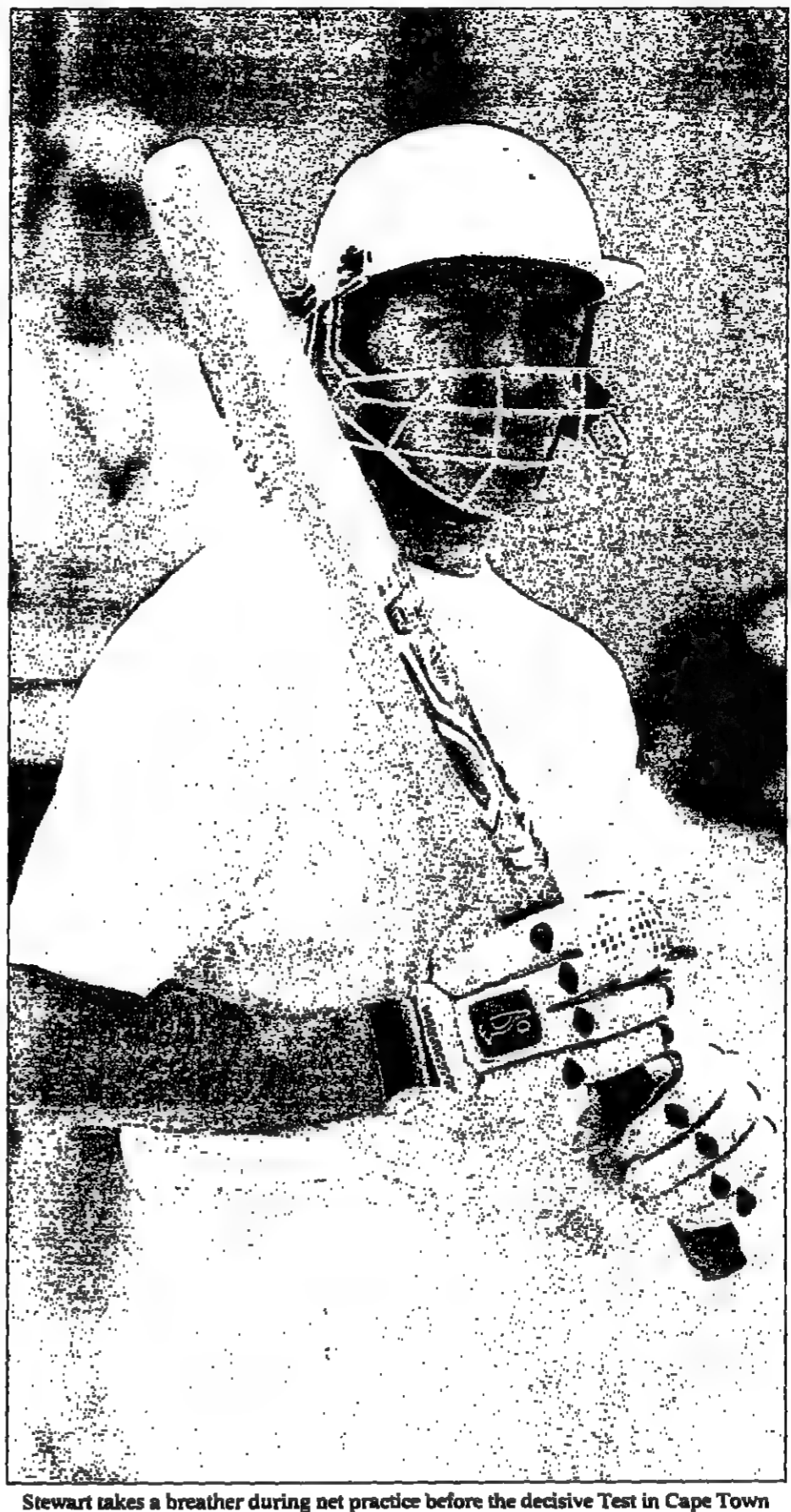
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Stewart takes a breather during net practice before the decisive Test in Cape Town

England										South Africa									
Batting	M	NO	Runs	HS	Avg	100	50	St	Cts	Batting	M	NO	Runs	HS	Avg	100	50	St	Cts
M A Atherton	4	1	380	186	78.00	1	2	1	21/2	B M McMillen	4	1	213	100	50.25	1	0	0	2
G A Hick	4	2	255	141	63.75	0	1	1	21/2	D J Richardson	4	1	209	110	47.25	1	0	0	2
P J Maynard	4	2	125	57	31.25	0	0	1	1	A A Donald	4	1	185	100	46.25	1	0	0	2
A J Stewart	4	0	215	81	53.75	0	1	1	1	S M Pollock	4	1	185	100	46.25	1	0	0	2
D A Smith	4	0	175	58	43.75	0	0	1	1	J N Rhodes	4	1	149	57	37.25	0	1	0	1
G F Thorpe	4	1	108	34	27.00	0	0	0	0	D J Richardson	4	1	114	84	28.50	0	1	0	1
J R Garner	4	0	42	28	10.50	0	0	0	0	W J Cronje	4	1	101	45	25.25	0	0	0	1
D G Coak	4	0	28	28	7.00	0	0	0	0	A C Hudson	4	1	97	45	24.25	0	0	0	1
R K Wengert	4	0	26	26	6.50	0	0	0	0	M W Pridge	4	1	12	10	3.00	0	0	0	1
M R Ramprakash	4	0	13	9	3.25	0	0	0	0	C E Banton	4	1	12	13	3.00	0	0	0	1
A R C Fraser	4	0	4	4	1.00	0	0	0	0	C E Banton	4	1	12	13	3.00	0	0	0	1
P J Maynard	4	0	4	4	1.00	0	0	0	0	C R Matthews	4	1	20	15	5.00	0	0	0	1
D G Coak	4	0	2	2	0.50	0	0	0	0	K N Kallis	4	1	1	1	0.25	0	0	0	1
D E Maitland	4	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	R N Schultz	4	1	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	1
J P Crawley	4	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	P R Adams	4	1	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	1
M C Lott	4	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0	0										

Bowling

England	O	M	R	W	Avg	Best	St	Wkts
R K Wengert	30.5	27	187	9	20.77	3-37	0	0
D E Maitland	25	7	125	0	18.18	0-0	0	0
P J Maynard	27	28	175	0	18.18	0-0	0	0
D G Coak	18.5	42	402	16	25.12	5-84	1	0
A R C Fraser	46	11	155	3	51.66	1-20	0	0
M C Lott	44	11	155	3	51.66	1-20	0	0
J P Crawley	27	5	110	1	110.00	1-36	0	0
J R Garner	2	0	4	1	4.00	1-0	0	0
D G Coak	24	4	112	0	28.00	0-0	0	0
M R Ramprakash	8	0	19	0	23.75	0-0	0	0

Slough rue escaping the weather

IT WAS not a good weekend for the premier division of ice hockey's British League, with only three of six scheduled games completed (Norman de Mesquita writes). On Saturday, Basingstoke Bison failed to get to Sheffield and Durham Wasps' game at Milton Keynes was reduced in status to a challenge fixture because the Wasps had three players away with the Great Britain Under-21 squad.

On Sunday, Humberston Hawks and Milton Keynes Kings stood 3-3 at the end of the first period, only for the ice-making machine to break down and deposit a quantity of hydraulic oil on the ice and cause the game to be abandoned. In the only premier division fixture that did survive on Sunday, Basingstoke gained their expected victory at Slough Jets, running out 8-5 winners.

There was a full first division programme with Blackburn Hawks and Manchester Storm both running up double-figure scores to maintain their hold on the top two positions.

John Haig had five goals and five assists in the Hawks' 18-1 demolition of Billingham Bombers, while Hilton Ruggles was involved in six of the Storm's goals in their 11-4 away win over Peterborough Pirates. Telford Tigers, in third place, lost ground, beaten by Guildford Flames.

Garcia's goal to improve on role of gold reserve

Russell Garcia has given up counting his international hockey caps. As a callow, star-struck youth, he used to write the details of each one down in a notebook. But no longer. He has neither the time nor a book big enough. "It must be about 185 now," he said on a brief visit back to old haunts in Portsmouth. "I've just lost it, there is so much of it now."

So much indeed, Garcia seems to have been around forever. He actually has 177 caps and is the only member of the 1988 gold medal-winning team still playing internationally. The Seoul survivor was 17 then, 25 now, and yet, in Olympic year, there is still a long-running score to be settled.

"In the run-up to Seoul, I was playing every minute of every game. In the tournament, I played the odd 20 minutes here and there. It was understandable. Everyone knew who the starting XI was. So I've got the gold medal, but I would have liked to walk away from the tournament knowing I was an important member of the team."

During the next month, when Great Britain have to endure the peculiar torture of Olympic qualification, Garcia's experience, his calm, unruffled presence in the engine-room, will be critical to a team brimming with talent but lacking the competitive edge. David Whittle, the team manager, who has known Garcia from his schoolboy days, said that he is still waiting for his man to produce his best in a big tournament.

"He has balance, good stamina and his short-passing game is very good, but I think he would be the first to say that he hasn't really lived up to his reputation. He has a

fabulous temperament, very professional in everything he does. We just want a bit more needle from him, a bit more aggression," Whittle said. When winning an England Under-21 cap at the age of 15, scoring four against Australia in one match in Pakistan in 1993, and having that gold medal in the bank at an age when most are choosing careers is part of the reputation, living up to it is not the easiest task.

The faintly grudging air with which Garcia accepts the criticism betrays his truth. The World Cup in 1994 was to have marked his grand entrance into the land of the world class, but he over-trained. "I didn't

Andrew Longmore on a Great Britain hockey player with a pressing Olympic score to settle

play badly, I just didn't do what I know I can do and they know I can do. I was very safe, no mistakes, but I didn't make things happen," he said.

The Olympic qualifying tournament, which starts against India on January 19 and involves seven games in 11 days, is the ideal garden

for Garcia's final flowering. The venue is the Polo Barcelona club, a swish, exclusive club for wealthy Catalans, where Garcia plays and coaches and where, by a strange coincidence, he made his international debut at 17.

Aranza Sanchez Vicario can occasionally be found practising on one of the club's 45 clay courts. Garcia moved from Havant three years ago so that he could devote his life to hockey and, if the only logic to the change was that his surname has distant Spanish origins, the move, say those close to him, has done him good personally and professionally. Garcia was an only child. His

father died from pneumonia when he was barely one, leaving his mother, Julie, a county-standard netball player, to bring up a boy whose talents were expressed largely on the hockey field. Jobs as a development officer in local schools and as a rep selling medical supplies were in Garcia's words, "just not me". He wanted to play hockey all the time and have a chance denied to him at Havant, to give some substance to his thoughts.

"I don't want to be the king, but I did attract me for someone to say: 'Russell, here's a team, you try to make it play the way you want.' At Barcelona, I do the talking, I pick the team. I had to communicate, whereas before I was doing more of the listening." He admires the ways of Johan Cruyff down the road at the Nou Camp. "His teams are based on very simple things — good fitness, good first touch. I'd like to meet him."

In the meantime, Garcia has work to do in the Britain midfield in a tournament notorious for upsets. With five of the eight teams qualifying, Britain should progress and Garcia's belief that the team is better balanced than in Barcelona four years ago augurs well for the year ahead. "It looks easy enough, but it won't be," he said.

Then, all being well, it will be on to Atlanta and further reminders of Olympic glories past. Still the modesty persists. "I'd rather go to the tournament, sit on the bench and win gold than win player of the tournament and finish sixth. I'd love to walk away with another gold and for, this time, people to say: 'Hey, that's Russell Garcia.' But, sometimes, I have to remind myself I have already won a gold."



Garcia at training in Portsmouth as the Olympic qualifying tournament looms. Photograph: Julian Herbert

Australia call Jones into squad

AUSTRALIA have recalled Dean Jones from the international cricket wilderness by selecting him in a preliminary 18-man squad for the World Cup next month.

Jones's return to the one-day scene might be brief as Mark Taylor's side prepares for the tournament in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India.

The Australia selectors will announce a final squad of 14 players on January 22 and Jones, 34, must outscore one of the established batsmen.

The players who miss final selection for the 14-man squad can be called up if a squad member is injured before the start of the World Cup.

Mumtaz Muralitharan, the off-spinner who was called for throwing in the recent Test match at Melbourne, has been included in Sri Lanka's preliminary 18-strong squad.

AUSTRALIA SQUAD: M A Taylor (captain), M J Slater, M E Waugh, S R Waugh, D M Jones, M G Bevan, S L Law, R Poretti, J McDermott, M R Ramprakash, G D McGrath, O W Ross, K Walters, R A Day.

Crockett is inspiration for Colts' play-off win

By Our Sports Staff

ZACK CROCKETT, the stand-in running back, was the surprise package as Indianapolis Colts beat San Diego Chargers, the defending American Football Conference (AFC) champions, 35-20 in the AFC wild-card game on Sunday night.

Crockett, coming on after Marshall Faulk went off with a bruised knee in the opening period, ran for two touchdowns and 147 yards on 13 carries, setting a Colts post-season record — after a regular season in which he had just one carry and gained no yards, Crockett scored on runs of 33 and 66 yards.

The second touchdown, in the fourth quarter, set a Colts franchise post-season record and was the longest-rushing play by the Colts since Tom Matney's 58-yarder in the 1969 Super Bowl against New York Jets. Crockett, from Florida State, gave the Colts control of a see-saw game and stunned

five play-off game defeats and earned them a trip to Kansas City on Sunday. Ted Marchibroda, the Colts coach, said: "After the game was over, I told the guys that we were one of eight teams left and we have two more steps to get to the top of the mountain."

The two teams met on the penultimate weekend of the regular season, a game won by San Diego. The Colts employed a zone defense this time after their man-for-man system proved their undoing in the previous meeting. The tactic paid off and Jason Bensen, the Colts' safety, said: "Our defensive package was just so good. We looked at the film and made the changes."

Earlier, Brett Favre threw for 199 yards and three touchdowns, with Edgar Bennett running for a Green Bay play-off record, as the Packers beat Atlanta Falcons 37-20 in the National Football Conference (NFC) wild-card game.

Favre, who spent his rookie season in Atlanta before being traded to Green Bay in 1992, rallied the Packers to a 27-10 half-time lead after Jeff George gave Atlanta an early lead with a 65-yard touchdown pass to Eric Metcalf.

Favre, who threw an NFL-best 38 touchdowns this year and was named the NFL offensive player of the year, picked apart Atlanta's defence, which yielded an NFL-record 4.751 passing yards, but he had plenty of help. Amid fog and snow flurries in the first half, he completed passes to nine different receivers.

Bennett, Green Bay's first 1,000-yard rusher, rushed 108 yards on 24 carries, improving by three yards the Packers record shared by Jim Taylor and Paul Hornung. The Packers will face the 49ers, the reigning Super Bowl champions, on Saturday in San Francisco.

PLAY-OFF SCHEDULE: Divisional play-off: January 6; Pittsburgh v Buffalo, San Francisco v Green Bay, January 7; Dallas v Philadelphia, Kansas City v Indianapolis, January 14; Conference championship: January 28; Super Bowl XXXI, February.

The Colts' first play-off victory in 24 years ended a run of

Results

the crowd at Jack Murphy Stadium with his 66-yard touchdown run with 11min 28sec remaining. Chargers end Leslie O'Neal overran the delay play and Crockett chugged up the middle of the field, picking up a block from Lamont Warren to give the Colts a 28-20 lead.

For his first touchdown run, Crockett made a shambles of a defence noted for its play against the run, going untouched for 33 yards to give the Colts a 14-10 lead with 11min 45sec remaining of the second quarter.

"Zack was unbelievable," Jim Harbaugh, the Colts quarterback who threw for two touchdowns in the match, said. "It was crazy the way he was running out there. That one 66-yarder was a beautiful thing. You've got to give some credit to our offensive line."

The Colts' first play-off victory in 24 years ended a run of



Lane's delight is evident after his lucrative victory in the world championship of golf in Scottsdale, Arizona

Lane reserves his best for last hole

By Our Sports Staff

BARRY LANE enjoyed the biggest payday of his career when he beat David Frost in the final of the Andersen Consulting world championship of golf in Scottsdale, Arizona. His two-up victory earned him £660,000.

Lane, from Berkshire, took a three-hole lead after 25 holes of the 36-hole final of the match-play event, which carried total prize-money of £2.4 million. But Frost, of South Africa, clawed back to level the match seven holes later. Lane regained the lead with a birdie at the par-four 33rd and sealed victory with a birdie on the last.

The Englishman shot a five-under-par 67 on the first 18 holes of the final, compared with Frost's 71, but was only

one up. Lane was credited with an eagle three on the 562-yard 9th after Frost had a bogey and conceded a 15-foot putt.

Another bogey from Frost put Lane two up after 20 holes but Lane missed a four-footer for a birdie on the 21st and, with it, a chance to go three up. The next four holes were halved before Lane finally got to three up when Frost had a bogey at the 25th.

Lane's second shot at the 27th landed in a bunker, and his first attempt from the sand stayed in. Frost made a spectacular chip to save par and Lane's bogey six reduced his lead to two holes.

It was the first of three straight holes in which Lane hit a bunker and found himself putting for par while Frost putted for birdie. Frost parred all three holes, while Lane had to sink an eight-footer to

save par on the 29th hole to remain one up. Frost then drew level with a birdie on the 31st hole. Lane regained the lead with a six-foot birdie putt at the 33rd and holed from nine feet on the last green to seal victory.

Frost earned £330,000 as the runner-up, while Lane's prize was some consolation for his failure to gain a place in the Europe Ryder Cup team which regained the trophy from the United States in September.

In the 18-hole match for third place, Mark McCumber, of the United States, won three consecutive holes early on the back nine and beat Masahiro Kuramoto, of Japan, 4 and 3. McCumber earned £230,000 and Kuramoto, whom Lane had defeated two up in the semi-finals, £200,000.

Challenge gets greater as national event goes global

Mel Webb salutes the remarkable success of a three-year-old corporate golf tournament

In the short history of The Times Mees-Person Corporate Golf Challenge, winning the national title has been enough to keep even the most ambitious of golfing businesses happy. From this year, however, the prize is to become immeasurably greater as the concept of competitive corporate golf goes worldwide.

The World Corporate Golf Challenge, launched this week, is to expand the horizons of the phenomenally successful pioneer competition that has grown so dramatically during its three-year existence.

Last year, the Challenge in the British Isles attracted nearly 800 company registrations and almost 50,000 players, which makes it one of the world's leading golf events. It was the first golf competition to be aimed specifically at the business community when it was launched in 1993; it remains unchallengeably the best.

Imagine, then, the response that is likely in the United States, where an agreement has recently been completed to stage its first Corporate Challenge this year. The winners of that event will play in their national final at the PGA National at West Palm Beach, Florida.

The United States Challenge will be staged by a joint venture partnership, the British arm of which is a company that has been established by Mitchell Ellingham Associates (MEA). MEA is the parent company of Mitchell Marketing Associates (MMA), the firm which conceived the event in the British Isles and which continues to run it on behalf of The Times and Mees-Person, the Dutch-owned merchant bank.

The Challenge has also been taken to Jamaica and Holland, where the versatility of the competition has been clearly demonstrated. In Jamaica, still an emerging country in the field of corporate golf, the event has been considerably smaller, open to entry by

subscription but no less successful, while in Holland the template of the British tournament has been adapted to suit local needs and requirements.

"It was obvious from when we started this competition that its flexibility would be the point that would make it suitable for just about any market," John Mitchell, managing director of MMA, said. "We were confident on day one that, even given major territorial differences, the concept would be capable of adaptation without losing the essence of the competition. The response we have had worldwide underlines that."

Already the event has been taken up on a licensee basis by



such diverse business cultures as those in India, South Africa, New Zealand and Australia. The one constant is the scoring system — four golfers to form the team, at least one from the host company, best two Stableford scores on each hole to count. Everything else is negotiable.

Interest in the Challenge has been expressed by many other countries, and MMA are actively engaged in a search for leading companies in sports event management and public relations to turn a unique concept into reality elsewhere.

The first world final, to be organised by MMA, will be held in February or March of 1997 at one of a host of high-quality golfing venues, yet to be announced. The winners of The Times Mees-Person Corporate Golf Challenge this year will be there, representing company, competition and country.

DISCOVERY DATA: MOST EXPENSIVE SUIT: SPACE SHUTTLE CREW: \$14 MILLION

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	Depth (cm)		Conditions		Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow	
	L	U	Piste	Off-piste					
ANDORRA									
Soldeu	20	80	fair	heavy	fair	cloud	-2	31/12	
(Mixed conditions in tricky weather; mostly good though)									
AUSTRIA									
Mayrhofen	5	40	good	varied	closed	cloud	-2	1/12	
(Dusting of fresh snow, all 30 lifts open)									
St Anton	20	180	good	powder	fair	fine	-1	31/12	
(Odd rocky patch otherwise excellent skiing)									
Schladming	50	80	good	powder	good	cloud	-2	31/12	
(Excellent skiing with new snow; all lifts and runs open)									
FRANCE									
Les Arcs	35	180	good	powder	good	fair	0	31/12	
(Excellent skiing with new snow under sunny skies)									
Avoriaz	70	105	good	varied	fair	sun	0	31/12	
(Lots of good skiing in and around Avoriaz)									
Chamonix	30	175	good	powder	closed	fine	3	31/12	
(Good skiing in many areas but some rocky/stoney patches)									
Tignes	95	140	good	powder	good	fine	-1	31/12	
(Good skiing conditions, bright sunshine, new snow)									
Val d'Isère	100	180	good	powder	good	sun	2	31/12	
(Excellent skiing; almost all lifts and runs open)									
SWITZERLAND									
C Montana	80	110	good	varied	closed	sun	-1	1/12	
(Generally very good piste skiing; slopes skied)									
Verbier	70	110	good	varied	worn	fine	2	31/12	
(Excellent skiing above Runettes at 2,200m)									
Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper; art - artificial									

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain. L - lower slopes; U - upper; art - artificial.

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

0171-782 7344

LEGAL APPOINTMENTS

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

CHANCERY DIVISION

IN THE MATTER OF

REVENUE & CUSTOMS

INTERNATIONAL LIMITED

AND IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN

THAT IN PURSUANCE OF

THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

SECTION 447(1) OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

THE FOLLOWING

COMPANIES HAVE BEEN

PLACED IN LIQUIDATION

BY ORDER OF THE COURT

ON 11th DECEMBER 1995

THE LIQUIDATOR

IS

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The players' weekly and overall scores and their values if you are considering the transfer option

Code	Name	Team	Pos	Wk	Val
10101	T Flowers	Blackburn Rovers	1.00	+4	-16
10102	B Minn	Blackburn Rovers	1.00	0	-1
10301	P Schmeichel	Manchester United	5.00	-1	+2
10301	M Croxall	Nottingham Forest	2.50	+10	-14
10302	T Wright	Nottingham Forest	1.00	0	0
10401	D James	Liverpool	3.50	-3	+15
10402	A Warner	Liverpool	0.25	0	0
10501	J Lidd	Leeds United	3.00	0	-11
10502	M Beesley	Leeds United	0.75	+1	+1
10601	P Smith	Newcastle United	3.00	-3	0
10602	M Hooper	Newcastle United	1.00	0	0
10603	S Hialop	Newcastle United	3.00	0	+4
10701	I Walker	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	+2	+2
10702	E Thorntvedt	Tottenham Hotspur	1.00	0	0
10801	A Roberts	Queens Park Rangers	1.50	0	-7
10802	S Dykstra	Queens Park Rangers	1.00	0	0
10803	J Sommer	Queens Park Rangers	1.00	-8	-22
10901	H Segers	Wimbledon	1.50	-2	-2
10902	N Sullivan	Wimbledon	0.75	0	0
10903	P Head	Wimbledon	1.50	0	-36
11001	B Grobbelaar	Southampton	1.50	0	0
11002	D Beasant	Southampton	0.75	+5	-12
11101	D Kharine	Chelsea	2.50	-6	+10
11102	K Hitchcock	Chelsea	1.00	0	0
11201	D Seaman	Arsenal	5.00	0	+25
11202	V Barham	Arsenal	0.50	0	0
11301	K Pressman	Sheffield Wednesday	2.50	-1	-24
11302	C Woods	Sheffield Wednesday	2.50	0	0
11401	L Miodoski	West Ham United	2.50	0	-15
11402	L Sealey	West Ham United	0.50	0	0
11501	N Southall	Everton	2.50	+10	+13
11502	J Karsion	Everton	0.75	0	0
11601	S Ogrizovic	Coventry City	1.50	-1	-17
11602	J Gould	Coventry City	0.75	0	0
11603	J Folan	Coventry City	1.50	0	-35
11701	A Cotton	Manchester City	2.50	0	0
11702	A Dible	Manchester City	2.50	0	0
11703	E Unwin	Manchester City	2.00	-3	-16
11801	M Beards	Aston Villa	2.50	0	+14
11802	N Sprink	Aston Villa	1.00	0	-1
11901	A Miller	Middlesbrough	2.00	0	+3
11902	G Walsh	Middlesbrough	0.75	-8	-7
12001	K Brannigan	Bolton Wanderers	0.50	-8	-57
12002	A Davison	Bolton Wanderers	0.50	0	0



Ablett found the cost of the top strikers in ITF prohibitive and thought Mark Bright and Ian Rush were better value

Seaman saves Ablett

Gary Ablett, the Everton full back, explains the selection of his ITF side

IT WAS way back in the summer when I picked "The Ninja Warriors". It was the Friday night before the FA Charity Shield and we were in a hotel. "The Ninja" is my nickname at Everton — I have not a clue why. You will have to ask Neville Southall about it: one day about three years ago he called me "The Ninja" and it stuck. They have even put a puppet over my locker.

I was looking at first for a known goalscorer, but then I saw the prices. If you wanted a Shearer, Collymore or Fowler, it was going to cost an arm and a leg and I had decided to spend equal amounts of money throughout the team.

My most expensive buy was David Seaman at £5 million. If the rules had been different I would have gone for the whole of the Arsenal back five — that way you never concede many goals. But the rules say only two from each club and I went for Seaman and so far he has earned me more points than anyone else.

In midfield my two best buys have been David Ginola and Jim Magilton. When Ginola first signed for Newcastle, Keegan said he should carry a government health warning and I thought: "That will do for me." He is a great player but has not done quite so well since we have had that little cold spell. Hopefully, he will find a rich vein of form again.

This time last season Newcastle blew up, but they show no sign of doing that again. They are a great side; they are so difficult to break down. They have got pace all round and when they break they are dangerous every time. They have had a few hiccups, but if you can keep winning when you are not playing well, you are not going to be far off winning the title.

As for Jim, I know him from playing in Liverpool reserves; we grew up together. I always knew he was a good player and

he is showing it now. Southampton have not had the best of seasons so far but there are only a few points between the teams in the middle of the table and a couple of good wins could see them climbing up the table.

It does not take much to turn it around. Tottenham are not the best side we have played this season and look where they are. It is always easier looking down on the other clubs than looking up from the bottom.

When it came to picking Joe Royle, I had no qualms there. You just have to look at his record since he came to Everton. When he arrived we had taken just eight points from 13 games and then we had two tough matches against Liverpool and Chelsea. We took six out of six points.

I think it was a shame for Mike Walker that Joe Royle inherited the same players and seemed to get more out of them. I am not sure quite why it happens, but sometimes, when a new manager comes along, everyone feels they all start off on the same footing.

The old manager has his favourites, perhaps, the same players every week and the rest feel no hope. But a new manager comes along, everyone is a fresh face to him and suddenly everyone is fighting for their place in the team again.

ABLETT'S SELECTION	
Goalkeeper:	D Seaman (Arsenal) 5m
Full back:	G Seaman (Newcastle) 22.5m
	T Phillips (Chelsea) 21.5m
Centre backs:	J Scoble (Liverpool) 23.5m
	D Weatherall (Leeds) 23.5m
Midfielders:	G Waddle (Sheff Wed) 22.5m
	J Magilton (Sheff Wed) 22m
	D Barry (Blackburn) 21.5m
	D Ginola (Newcastle) 24.5m
Strikers:	M Bright (Sheff Wed) 22.5m
	I Rush (Liverpool) 22m
Manager:	J Royle (Everton) 22m

Code	Name	Team	Pos	Wk	Val
41405	I Bishop	West Ham United	1.50	0	+24
41406	D Gordon	West Ham United	1.00	0	0
41409	R Slater	West Ham United	1.00	0	+14
41410	S Lazarides	West Ham United	1.00	0	+2
41411	M Hughes	West Ham United	2.00	0	+15
41412	D Williamson	West Ham United	1.00	0	+6
41501	A Minchcliffe	Everton	5.00	0	+12
41502	J Ebbrell	Everton	1.50	+4	+16
41503	A Linpar	Everton	1.50	+3	+11
41504	S Horne	Everton	1.50	0	+5
41505	V Samways	Everton	1.00	+4	+24
41506	J Parkinson	Everton	0.50	0	+2
41508	A Grant	Everton	6.00	+8	+32
41509	A Kanchelakidze	Coventry City	2.00	0	+2
41601	P Cook	Coventry City	1.50	0	+14
41602	K Richardson	Coventry City	1.50	0	+2
41603	G Strachan	Coventry City	1.50	0	+21
41607	P Teller	Coventry City	3.00	0	0
41608	M Tashan	Coventry City	1.00	0	+9
41609	C Baffins	Coventry City	2.50	+3	+25
41610	J Salako	Coventry City	2.50	+1	+11
41701	G Fittcroft	Manchester City	3.00	0	+3
41702	P Beagrie	Manchester City	1.50	0	+18
41703	S Lomas	Manchester City	1.50	0	+11
41704	I Brightwell	Manchester City	1.50	+1	+22
41706	N Summerbee	Manchester City	1.50	+1	+27
41707	G Kinkaid	Manchester City	2.00	0	+13
41801	A Townsend	Aston Villa	2.00	0	+25
41802	I Taylor	Aston Villa	2.00	0	+23
41803	G Southgate	Aston Villa	0.50	0	0
41805	F Carr	Aston Villa	2.50	0	+28
41806	M Draper	Middlesbrough	1.00	0	+25
41901	C Hignett	Middlesbrough	2.00	+1	+1
41902	A Moore	Middlesbrough	1.00	0	+1
41903	J Moreno	Middlesbrough	0.75	0	+4
41904	R Muike	Middlesbrough	2.00	+1	+20
41905	J Pollock	Middlesbrough	1.50	0	+2
41906	B Robson	Middlesbrough	5.00	+2	+11
41907	Jonrho	Middlesbrough	2.50	0	+6
42002	D Lee	Bolton Wanderers	2.50	0	+13
42004	R Thompson	Bolton Wanderers	1.50	+2	+8
42005	M Patterson	Bolton Wanderers	0.75	0	+8
42007	W Sumell	Bolton Wanderers	0.50	0	0
42008	S Sellers	Bolton Wanderers	2.50	+2	+10
42009	S Currie	Bolton Wanderers	1.50	+1	+2

Code	Name	Team	Pos	Wk	Val
20101	H Berg	Blackburn Rovers	3.50	+4	+7
20102	G Le Saux	Blackburn Rovers	4.50	0	+3
20103	J Kinnear	Blackburn Rovers	3.50	+4	+12
20201	D Irwin	Manchester United	4.50	+1	+12
20202	P Parker	Manchester United	2.50	-3	+3
20203	G Neville	Manchester United	2.50	+2	+1
20204	P Neville	Manchester United	0.75	+5	+9
20301	S Pearce	Nottingham Forest	4.50	+1	+16
20302	D Lytle	Nottingham Forest	3.00	+8	+11
20303	A Hesland	Nottingham Forest	1.00	0	-9
20401	R James	Liverpool	3.00	-1	+23
20402	S Bjornby	Liverpool	3.00	0	+2
20403	S Harkness	Liverpool	0.75	-2	+24
20501	T Dorog	Leeds United	3.50	+4	+8
20502	G Kelly	Leeds United	3.00	+3	+9
20503	N Worthington	Leeds United	1.50	0	-1
20601	J Beardsford	Newcastle United	3.00	-2	+12
20602	M Hottinger	Newcastle United	3.00	0	0
20603	W Barton	Newcastle United	3.00	-2	+18
20701	D Austin	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	+3	+7
20702	J Edinburgh	Tottenham Hotspur	1.50	-2	-3
20703	S Campbell	Tottenham Hotspur	1.50	+2	+19
20704	D Karslake	Tottenham Hotspur	1.00	0	0
20705	C Wilson	Tottenham Hotspur	2.50	+4	+7
20801	D Bardsley	Queens Park Rangers	2.00	-3	-4
20802	R Brewett	Queens Park Rangers	1.50	-3	-3
20803	N Zello	Queens Park Rangers	2.50	0	-3
20901	A Kimble	Wimbledon	2.50	-1	-3
20902	G Elkins	Wimbledon	1.50	0	-12
20903	K Cunningham	Wimbledon	1.50	-1	-12
20904	R Joseph	Wimbledon	0.75	0	0
21001	J Dodd	Southampton	1.50	+4	+12
21002	F Berrill	Southampton	1.00	0	+5
21003	S Clifton	Southampton	1.00	+3	+5
21101	S Clarke	Chelsea	1.50	-2	+5
21102	S Milne	Chelsea	1.50	0	+3
21103	G Hall	Chelsea	0.50	0	+9
21104	A Myers	Chelsea	0.50	-1	+16
21105	T Phillips	Chelsea	1.50	0	0
21106	D Petracchi	Chelsea	2.50	+1	+15
21201	L Dixon	Arsenal	3.00	+2	+32
21202	N Winterburn	Arsenal	3.00	+1	+30
21203	S Morrow	Arsenal	1.50	0	0
21301	I Nolan	Sheffield Wednesday	2.50	0	+1
21302	P Atherton	Sheffield Wednesday	2.50	0	-4
21401	J Dicks	West Ham United	3.50	0	0
21402	T Brackner	West Ham United	3.00	0	-12
21403	K Brown	West Ham United	0.75	0	0
21404	K Rowland	West Ham United	0.75	0	+9
21501	G Lee	Everton	2.50	0	+10
21502	E Barrett	Everton	2.50	0	+4
21503	M Jackson	Everton	1.50	0	+13
21504	P Holmes	Everton	0.50	-2	-2
21601	D Burrows	Coventry City	1.50	0	0
21602	A Pickering	Coventry City	1.00	0	-6
21603	S Morgan	Coventry City	0.75	0	0
21604	M Hall	Coventry City	0.75	0	-19
21702	R Edgill	Manchester City	1.50	0	0
21703	D Brightwell	Manchester City	0.75	0	-1
21704	J Foster	Manchester City	2.50	0	+22
21801	G Charles	Aston Villa	4.50	0	+3
21802	S Stanston	Aston Villa	2.50	0	+21
21803	A Wright	Aston Villa	0.50	0	0
21804	P King	Aston Villa	0.50	0	0
21805	B Small	Aston Villa	0.50	0	0
21901	C Blackburn	Middlesbrough	0.75	0	0
21902	N Cox	Middlesbrough	1.00	+4	+23
21903	C Morris	Middlesbrough	0.75	-2	+24
21904	C Fleming	Middlesbrough	0.50	-5	-5
22001	G Bergman	Bolton Wanderers	0.50	-1	-16
22002	S Green	Bolton Wanderers	0.25	-2	-13
22003	J Phillips	Bolton Wanderers	0.75	-2	-16
22004	A Todd	Bolton Wanderers	0.75	-1	-5
22005	S McAnespie	Bolton Wanderers	0.50	0	+1

Code	Name	Team	Pos	Wk	Val
30705	J Cundy	Tottenham Hotspur	0.50	0	0
30801	D Maddox	Queens Park Rangers	1.50	-1	-8
30802	S Yates	Queens Park Rangers	1.50	-3	-5
30803	A McDonald	Queens Park Rangers	2.00	-2	-2
30804	K Ready	Queens Park Rangers	0.75	0	-6
30901	A Reeves	Wimbledon	2.50	-1	-2
30902	A Thorn	Wimbledon	0.75	0	-4
30903	S Fitzgerald	Wimbledon	0.75	0	-8
30904	C Perry	Wimbledon	1.00	0	-16
30905	A Pearce	Wimbledon	2.50	0	-2
31001	K Monkou	Southampton	1.50	+4	+5
31002	A Neilson	Southampton	1.50	0	+6
31003	R Hall	Southampton	1.50	+4	+4
31101	E Johnson	Chelsea	1.50	0	+14
31102	J Kjeldberg	Chelsea	1.50	0	0
31103	F Sinclair	Chelsea	2.00	0	+3
31104	D Lee	Chelsea	0.75	-2	+16
31201	T Adams	Arsenal	4.50	+4	+30
31202	S Beal	Arsenal	3.00	0	+24
31203	M Keown	Arsenal	1.50	+1	+20
31204	A Linighan	Arsenal	1.50	-2	-4
31301	D Walker	Sheffield Wednesday	2.50	0	+4
31401	S Potts	West Ham United	2.50	0	+6
31402	M Rieper	West Ham United	2.50	0	+3
31403	A Martin	West Ham United	1.00	0	+21
31404	A Whitbread	West Ham United	0.50	0	0
31501	D Unsworth	Everton	2.50	+8	+23
31502	D Watson	Everton	2.50	+1	+15
31503	C Short	Everton	2.50	+10	+17
31602	D Reimle	Coventry City	0.75	0	-7
31603	D Busst	Coventry City	0.75	0	+9
31604	S Burrows	Coventry City	1.50	0	-4
31605	R Shaw	Coventry City	1.50	-1	-15
31701	K Curle	Manchester City	1.50	-1	-1
31702	A Kermaghan	Manchester City	1.00	0	-1
31703	M Vonn	Manchester City	1.00	0	0
31704	K Symons	Manchester City	1.50	-1	+4
31801	U Ehlogu	Aston Villa	2.50	0	+20
31802	P McGrath	Aston Villa	1.50	0	+11
31803	C Tiler	Aston Villa	0.75	0	+1
31804	N Pearson	Middlesbrough	0.75	-3	+17
31902	S Vickers	Middlesbrough	0.75	-3	+26
31903	P Whelan	Middlesbrough	0.75	-1	+14
31904	D Whyte	Middlesbrough	0.75	-1	+14
32001	A Stiles	Bolton Wanderers	1.50	0	-1
32002	C Fairclough	Bolton Wanderers	1.50	-20	-15
32003	S Coleman	Bolton Wanderers	0.75	0	0
32004	G Taggart	Bolton Wanderers	1.50	-3	-2
32005	C Svingerg	Bolton Wanderers	0.50	0	0

THE TIMES TUESDAY JANUARY 2 1996

Leader's margin reduced to three points as nearest rivals enjoy successful week

Kickers' slip-up helps rivals to close the gap

I had to happen, finally. Kevin Kickers, who had looked to have one hand already on the Interactive Team Football (ITF) prize, have finally reached the end of their hot streak. And with Mr B Bear's Teddy Five enjoying a bumper week, the lead in Interactive Team Football is down to just three points.

Things can change quickly in football and the Kickers' slip-up means the race for the £50,000 first prize is well and truly on. Teddy Five, the team giving hardest chase to the leader, racked up a massive 41 points during the last week to move him up to 354. Mr James, the manager of Kevin Kickers, managed just two points in the same period and moves on to 357. On their heels is Gohills Gods 65, the team of Mr B. Gohill, whose 35 points leave him close behind on 353.

The next week of action will be of particular interest and could see the lead change hands for the first time since the early weeks of the competition. The temporary change in Kevin Kickers' fortunes should certainly encourage everyone not to give up pursuit.

With the usual rash of post-Christmas sales, it seems a suitable time to highlight where bargains can be found in ITF. Here is a list of players whose price-tags when the competition began now look decidedly cheap.

Steve Harkness, of Liverpool, and Neil Cox, of Middlesbrough, cost just £0.75 million and have scored 24 and 23 points respectively from the full back position. The same price would have bought Cox's team-mates Steve Vickers (26 points) and Nigel Pearson (16 points). Vickers has proved one of the bargain buys of the competition.

In midfield, any of David Beckham, of Manchester United, Joe Parkinson, of Everton, or Craig Hignett, of Middlesbrough, would have graced your ITF side despite a bargain-basement value. But value is much harder to find when it comes to purchasing strikers. Jason Lee, of Nottingham Forest, and Ronnie Rosenhal, of Tottenham, have



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



scored in excess of 20 points while costing £1.5 million. Otherwise, in this area at least, you get what you pay for.

If you want to shop around for new talent, with your players lacking form and fitness, you can move into the transfer market to improve your fortunes. ITF has a transfer system which allows you to change up to two players each week. Which player you want to offload and whom you replace him with is up to you, although you must replace the outgoing player with one from the same category (ie, a full back with a full back) and keep within your £35 million budget.

The ITF transfer system also allows you to adjust your team if one of your players is

actually transferred out of the FA Carling Premiership. He would then no longer be eligible for ITF. Any overseas or Endsleigh Insurance League players who move into the Premiership during the season will become available for transfer.

You can make transfers only by telephone. Using a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone), call the 0891 333 331 line. Calls during the times given will be charged at 39 pence per minute, 49 pence per minute at other times. If you are calling from the Republic of Ireland, you must call 004 499 020 0631 and you will be charged 58 pence per minute at all times.

A player transferred out of your team must be replaced by a player from the same category — for example, a full back for a full back — so that the formation of a goalkeeper, two full backs, two central defenders, four midfield players, two strikers and a manager is maintained.

When making a transfer, you must ensure that the team value still falls within your £35 million budget and does not contain more than two individuals from the same club.

If you are lagging behind the leading team selectors, the transfer system will be an appealing option to you in the chase for the £50,000 prize or the monthly £500 prize.

With ITF, not only are you pitting your selectorial skills against other readers of *The Times*, you are also matching your wits against those in the know. With the support of the Professional Footballers' Association, Premiership players have entered sides of their own, and Gary Ablett, of Everton, gives his selection on the opposite page. Like him, you may spend £5 million on Alan Shearer — but will he do better than other cheaper alternatives?

All matches in the Premiership and those in the FA Cup involving Premiership clubs count and your players and manager win and lose you points. With the competition now into its full stride, it is time for you to delve into the transfer market?

□ All queries regarding the transfer system in Interactive Team Football should be directed to 0171 757 7016. Inquiries about other aspects of play can be made on 01582 458 122.



Neil Cox, of Middlesbrough, right, has blossomed since his move from Aston Villa and his 23 points rank him among the best full backs in ITF

HOW THE SCORING SYSTEM WORKS IN ITF

All FA Carling Premiership and FA Cup matches in the 1995-96 season count for points. Every goal and penalty counts.

POINTS SCORED		POINTS DEDUCTED	
Goalkeeper	4pts	Goalie	1pt
Keeps clean sheet	3pts	Concedes penalty	1pt
Scores goal	3pts	Misses penalty	1pt
Full back/Central defender	3pts	Scores own goal	1pt
Keeps clean sheet	3pts	Manager	1pt
Scores goal	3pts	Team wins	1pt
Midfield player	1pt	Team draws	1pt
Keeps clean sheet	1pt	Team loses	1pt
Scores goal	1pt		

* Must have played for 75 minutes in the match
† Must have played for 45 minutes in the match

HOW TO MAKE A TRANSFER IN ITF

Call 0891 333 331

* Calls cost (per minute) 39p cheap rate, 49p other times. Rep. 58p

If calling from the Republic of Ireland, call 004 499 020 0631

You can make transfers only by telephone using a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone). You will need your ten-digit selector's PIN, which must be typed in and not spoken. Follow the simple instructions and use the players' five-digit codes.

The line is open from 8pm on Tuesday until 11pm on Saturday; from 6pm on Saturday to 11pm on Sunday and from 6pm on Sunday until 3pm on Monday. If there are midweek matches, the line will also close at 3pm on the day of the match (or matches) and re-open the following day at 6pm.

You may make up to (but no more than) two transfers a week. Each transfer is a separate transaction and you must send a player before you can buy one.

A player transferred out of your team must be replaced by a player from the same category — for example a full back for a full back.

When purchasing a player you must ensure that the team value still falls within your £35 million budget (even if your next transfer would rectify any overspending) and does not contain more than two individuals (two players or one player and a manager) from the same club.

Your new player only starts to score points for you when his transfer is registered. The score of the player transferred out is taken at the time of transfer; he then ceases to score for you.

Player out: Club: _____ Player code: _____

Player in: Club: _____ Player code: _____

THE WEEK'S TRANSFERS IN ITF

IN
There are no transfers into the ITF game this week.

OUT
There are no transfers out of the ITF game this week.

THE LEADING 250 SELECTORS IN INTERACTIVE TEAM FOOTBALL

Pos	Team	(Player's name)	Pts
1	Kevin Kickers	(K James)	357
2	Teddy Five	(Mr B Bear)	354
3	Gohills Gods 65	(Mr B Gohill)	353
4	Roscoe Supers	(P Sutton)	326
5	Tommy Goodies XI	(K Booth)	326
6	Short And Stubbs	(S Brewer)	323
7	Stevens Lions 2	(S Brewer)	322
8	Stevens Lions 7	(K Brown)	320
9	Sunderland Stars	(A Hancock)	319
10	Nigels Right Foot	(K R Patel)	319
11	KP Fantasy Team 4	(M L Jones)	319
12	James Boys Six	(Mr S Tye)	318
13	Tyres Blue Noses	(Mr P Johnson)	317
14	They're Here	(Mr P Johnson)	316
15	My Cat Baitly	(S Brewer)	316
16	Stevens Lions 5	(J Nicholl)	315
17	Al's Alcorns	(M Persich)	314
18	Percy Progress	(Mr A P Jacobucci)	314
19	Jacobucci FC	(P C Diworh)	313
20	Twilight United	(Mr J Donovan)	312
21	Nirvana FC	(S Law)	311
22	Weldon Wanderers FC	(S Brewer)	311
23	Stevens Lions 6	(S Murray)	311
24	Jeonnam 1980	(R Pike)	310
25	Adams Men Or God 4	(Mr D Lovell)	309
26	Harrington United	(C Loxton)	308
27	Luxon's Longshots	(Mr G Santos)	308
28	Strangers	(A Norton)	308
29	Formby Flyers	(Mr A Nadison)	307
30	Jessie's Darlings 4	(P Hanne)	307
31	Finilly City	(J Harrison)	307
32	Gulford Marching	(Mr J M Harris)	307
33	Oncelbluemoon	(Mr D Clarke)	307
34	Physico And Smith	(K Booth)	307
35	Martinez 5	(T Martin)	306
36	Goal Diggers	(C Stacey)	306
37	Kims Kickers	(G Sutton)	306
38	M I Blues	(P C Hardan)	306
39	Transporter	(A Jenkinson)	306
40	Fordery Rangers	(J Lees)	306
41	Owens Dribblers	(A J Philcox)	305
42	Aberspurs	(G Shand)	305
43	The Conjurers	(Mr D J Farmer)	304
44	Phyloc TV	(T Vandy)	304
45	Who Needs Mark	(P Persich)	304
46	The Young Guns	(G Shepherd)	304
47	Map 9	(M Priestley)	303
48	Bohnen Forest	(S Bunn)	303
49	Bunwell United	(R Banham)	303
50	Anglen Flyers	(E Ronald)	302
51	Adams Men Or God 1	(R Pike)	302
52	Barry's Army	(J P Barry)	301
53	Jaymes Jugs	(K Hughes)	301
54	Acornfield Otis	(Mr M Raja)	301
55	Barnet FC	(Mr P Johnson)	301
56	Mama Runas FC	(J Anderson)	301
57	Apollo 2	(J Elders)	301
58	The UK Beavers	(T McCuskey)	301
59	Mac United	(S Brewer)	300
60	Stevens Lions 8	(Mr S Hughes)	300
61	The Celtic Eaters	(Mr A F Wimer)	300
62	Winters Wanderers	(C Woodward)	300
63	Fair Fair Flapster	(P Simpson)	300
64	Forgies Fury	(K Booth)	300
65	The Good, Bad & Ugly	(E Donald)	299
66	Quinton Forest	(J Baker)	299

FIND OUT HOW YOUR TEAM IS DOING



Check your points total and your ranking. You need a Touch-tone (DTMF) telephone (most push-button telephones with a * and a hash key are Touch-tone) and your ten-digit selector's PIN. The line is open from noon to 11pm.

Pos	Team	(Player's name)	Pts
67	Stylights	(J Dale)	299
68	Straw FC	(S Bartlett)	299
69	Razor's Raiders	(R A Knowles)	299
70	Clarks Ducks	(T Collier)	299
71	Orville	(R Matthews)	298
72	Sam 4	(P Hynes)	298
73	Jessie's Tops 12	(J Sennett)	298
74	Mimosa United	(M Ammitstead)	298
75	JLS 18	(J Sutton-Jones)	298
76	The Likely Lads	(G Pedder)	298
77	The Parrados	(P Parke)	298
78	Stevens Lions 1	(R Read)	298
79	Novocastrians	(S Brewer)	298
80	Long Drive	(E Donald)	297
81	Lemonias	(T Parker)	297
82	Cameron Athan	(Mr P Gregorou)	297
83	Walters Crispet	(Mr J R Reader)	297
84	Real Althelec	(Mr M D Walker)	297
85	Madrid Knights	(Mrs G Keynes)	297
86	Very Forward	(R Jenkinson)	297
87	Incubus	(A Pearce)	297
88	Semli ITF	(S Daly)	296
89	Sharon's Buds	(Mr F Amone)	296
90	Jovial Utd	(Mr D Conroy)	296
91	Allstars XI	(Mr N Hurst)	296
92	Rassled 3	(D Dunn)	296
93	Francis Caldwell FC	(D Shuter)	296
94	The Wee One Too	(F Caldwell)	296
95	Chosen Men	(A Nelson)	296
96	Robbo's Army	(J McCracken)	296
97	Chip N' Dale XI	(P Callaghan)	295
98	Blossombury Mill	(Mrs E L Arrowsmith)	295
99	Monmouth United	(C Spackman)	295
100	Venencie	(P Ebding)	295
101	Gohills Gods 73	(G Batchelor)	295
102	Richardsons Rubies	(Mr B Gohill)	295
103	Hory's Rovers	(J Richardson)	295
104	Gary Pearce	(J Weal)	295
105	Climbom Blues	(G D Pearce)	295
106	I Love Esther	(N Jones)	294
107	Map 6	(Mr P Johnson)	294
108	Bassett's Bouncers	(M Priestley)	294
109	Times R Us FC		
110	Lucks Rovers 3		
111	The Black Knights		
112	No Sam Today		
113	The Mainstays		
114	PJB Rovers		
115	No Hopes		
116	Overhill Rovers		
117	Scol Utd		
118	Turners Earners 2		
119	Rapid Overton		
120	Goats Please		
121	Woodstock XI		
122	Eggs N'ham		
123	Orbital Brushes		
124	Merts Mates 20		
125	Green Wonders		
126	Radford Rovers		
127	Adrian James Utd		
128	Hera We Go		
129	Shrew Voles		
130	The Premier Raiders		
131	No Fear Utd		
132	Grove Rovers		
133	Dawson Dreamteam		
134	Doug's Desperados		
135	JRP Rovers		
136	All Stars		
137	Clarks Coasters		
138	Glass's Goers		
139	Taste Of Aberdeen		
140	Wharves Botham		
141	Donkeys Utd		
142	Henry Hilda		
143	Barnet Buy Cole		
144	Alla Tarian Army		
145	Go Go Champions		
146	Hanliss 1st 11		
147	Nookies Bears		
148	Warren Wizards		
149	Melids Skill Monsters		
150	Tunde United		
151	Map 5		
152	Ny Chilli Dogs		
153	Mukhtar's Maestros		
154	Evans Mac		
155	Chilchese Rovers		
156	Grahams Allstars		
157	Disa Pairs		
158	Beardsleys Hair		
159	Pure & Average		
160	Sky Blue Royals		
161	Dyer's Brights		
162	Mean Machine		
163	The Doug Hutchies		
164	Reza Rovers		
165	MGM		
166	Good Times United		
167	Pursell Rangers		
168	Always Hope		
169	Farleigh Vale		
170	Mathemagicians X		
171	Pig In A Polo		
172	L R Scapicals		
173	Swerve FC		
174	Mega Eleven		
175	Womashearer		
176	Hull Red Devils		
177	Sully's A Team		

Pos	Team	(Player's name)	Pts
178	Bassett's Bouncers	(J Hurd)	294
179	Times R Us FC	(N Bywater)	294
180	Lucks Rovers 3	(N Bruter)	294
181	The Black Knights	(R A Green)	293
182	No Sam Today	(N Webb)	293
183	The Mainstays	(B Whitley)	293
184	PJB Rovers	(Mr P J Butler)	293
185	No Hopes	(S Harris)	293
186	Overhill Rovers	(Mr M James)	293
187	Scol Utd	(S Scottick)	292
188	Turners Earners 2	(J Smith)	292
189	Rapid Overton	(A Overton)	292
190	Goats Please	(J Smith)	292
191	Woodstock XI	(A Goodie)	292
192	Eggs N'ham	(K R Grogan)	292
193	Orbital Brushes	(Mr D Warner)	292
194	Merts Mates 20	(Mr S Broome)	292
195	Green Wonders	(Mr M Hild)	292
196	Radford Rovers	(A Evans)	292
197	Adrian James Utd	(A Radford)	292
198	Hera We Go	(S Reynolds)	292
199	Shrew Voles	(Mr S Smith)	292
200	The Premier Raiders	(H Breshaw)	292
201	No Fear Utd	(Mrs C Eilo)	292
202	Grove Rovers	(S Saunders)	292
203	Dawson Dreamteam	(N Dawson)	291
204	Doug's Desperados	(Mr D F Richardson)	291

Exeter shrouded in fog as racing resumes after ten-day break



The blinkered Lisotho plays a prominent part in Pipe's profitable raid on Exeter yesterday by outstaying his novice hurdle rivals in the testing conditions

Pipe's army marches to 129-1 treble

By RICHARD EVANS, RACING JOURNALIST OF THE YEAR

SWIRLING fog, which verged on the peacemaker at times, could not prevent Exeter racing yesterday — and Martin Pipe took full advantage at his favourite course with a 129-1 treble. David Bridgwater rode all three winners.

After a ten-day freeze-up, which not only halted all racing in Britain but also interrupted the training of many horses, fitness mattered more than ever and Pipe's horses clearly enjoyed an edge as Crossa's Delight, Lisotho and Challenger Du Lac won the first three races in testing conditions — before ever-thickening fog forced the cancellation of the final two races on the card.

"It's been a struggle, but we have managed to keep going. We have had tractors on the go all day long and we have been galloping late. But this has

been worth the hard work for all the team through the bad weather. Fitness counts," the five-times champion trainer said, adding: "Hats off to Devon and a happy new year to everyone."

The determination of Exeter's racecourse officials to see racing go ahead in difficult conditions was the perfect pick-me-up for a decent-sized crowd which braved the elements, although spectators gained only the occasional glimpse of action.

As the horses walked around the parade ring before the second race, the fog cleared sufficiently to allow a clear view of the home straight. By the time the horses had galloped to the start, the fog had descended to reduce visibility to little more than 50 yards and yet, when the leaders came round the final turn, all was clear again — briefly.

In truth, the conditions were distinctly similar to a New Year's Day hangover. For much of the day

everything was a haze, interrupted occasionally and unexpectedly by a brief spell of normality, only for the gloom to descend once again.

To give an accurate account of how individual horses ran and jumped would require the powers of Mystic

RICHARD EVANS

Map: IRON N GOLD
(2.00 Lingfield Park)
Next best: Duke Valentino
(3.00 Lingfield Park)

Meg, after Crossa's Delight emerged from the fog to win the opening seller, even Pipe allowed himself a tongue-in-cheek joke. "Always going well," he quipped.

Those brave ante-post punters who have forced the Nicky Henderson-trained Our Kris to favouritism for

the Triumph Hurdle at the Cheltenham Festival will take comfort from the victory of Lisotho, a former French-trained horse, in the well-contested Thurlstone Hotel One Hundred Juvenile Novices' Hurdle. On his only other British start, at Newbury in November, he was beaten out of sight by Our Kris.

However, the feature race of the afternoon saw the chasing debut of the highly regarded Feil The Power in the Win With The Tote Novices' Chase. With the fog timing its descent to cause maximum annoyance, only three of the 17 fences jumped could be seen by spectators.

Apparently jumping well at the head of the field, Feil The Power's stamina was found wanting over a trip just short of three miles and Challenger Du Lac booked his entry for the Sun Alliance Chase with a comfortable 12-length success. "It was a hot contest and a very good performance. He will be entered for

the Sun Alliance but may not stay at this trip. This horse has got some gears," Pipe enthused.

As for Feil The Power, Kim Bailey reported: "The trip was too far for him. On fast ground, three miles would be all right but on that going he wants 2½ miles."

Bailey intends being double-handed in the King George VI Tripleprint Chase on Saturday. Book Of Music pleased when he worked yesterday morning and will join Master Oats in the Sandown line-up. However, riding plans remain fluid and hinge heavily on the availability of Jamie Osborne and Graham Bradley.

On a seasonal note, there was insufficient rain in the stables for Jackie Rafter's four runners, but Purbeck Cavalier overcame spending the day in a lorry to win the Richard Thommason 21st Birthday Celebration Novices' Handicap Hurdle and provide the local trainer with her first winner of the season.

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S MEETING AT EXETER

Going: soft
12.45 (2m 2 f) 1. CROSA'S DELIGHT (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 2. Palace Parade (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 3. Palace Parade (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 4. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 5. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 6. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 7. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 8. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 9. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 10. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 11. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 12. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 13. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 14. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 15. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 16. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 17. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 18. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 19. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 20. Mr Playbill (11) (10) (Bridgwater, 5-4-10), 21. 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LAW

● HOW JPs DECIDE 30
● WHOSE AID? 30

Counselling for counsel

Should the professionals in traumatic trials also be offered extra help, asks David Conn

Immediately Rosemary West was convicted of ten horrific murders in November, the Lord Chancellor's Department (LCD) announced that it would be offering counselling to the jury. If the trial had distressed them, the jurors were told, they could make use of a freephone helpline, consult their GPs or, for the first time, see the department's own welfare officers.

Only days after the offer was made to the West jury, it was accepted; the jurors coming together for a group session with the LCD welfare officers. The department would not comment further on the nature of the session, but Cary Cooper, Professor of Psychology at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, and an expert on stress, explained that short "debriefings" are increasingly common after traumatic events.

Counsellors explain that post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can have a delayed genesis; symptoms may erupt suddenly long after the traumatic "event". People are encouraged not to bottle up their feelings and are advised where to seek help if symptoms develop.

Lawyers applauded the LCD's enlightened approach. Sacha Wass, junior counsel for Mrs West, said she sympathised with the jury, confronted with extremely disturbing material. John Nutting, QC, senior prosecutor at the Old Bailey, though not directly involved with the case, said: "I'm not surprised that the poor jury has to ask for counselling."

Yet among this admirable concern on the part of the



The trauma of hearing evidence such as that given in the Rosemary West trial can affect people for years

lawyers and the faint trace of self-congratulation by the LCD, psychologists were saying that the process should have gone further, to include the lawyers and the judge as well. "Why was the jury singled out?" asked Professor Cooper. "Everybody involved in the case should have some form of help. Lawyers may be more used to dealing with such matters — but they are still human beings."

Neither the Bar Council nor the Law Society provides counselling facilities. Judges, nominally LCD employees, can consult the welfare officers, but a spokesman knew of no cases in which they had.

Brian Leveson, QC, lead prosecuting counsel, took a few days off after the trial but was returning, according to his clerk, to "a full diary". Richard Ferguson, QC, Rosemary West's lead counsel, began another trial on November 28, five days after the West trial, defending a man accused of attempting to murder a policeman. And Ms Wass is

drafting the grounds for West's planned appeal.

The judge, Mr Justice Manton, following his sentencing of one of the worst mass murderers in history, was trying *Gurman v Allied Mills*, in which Mr Gurman was claiming compensation for a bad back he claimed had been caused at work.

Professor Cooper considers the absence of counselling facilities to be potentially very harmful, especially in the legal profession which, he argues, is not characterised by an openness about emotion.

"Nobody is immune," he said. "PTSD can be triggered by something personal. A case of child murder, for example, can cause distress to a parent of small children. It may not manifest itself until months later. Someone may suddenly feel anxious or irritable or depressed, and they do not relate it to work they did months ago. The purpose of initial counselling is to get it out at the beginning."

David Richards, principal welfare adviser to the Gloucestershire Constabulary, which

carried out the West murder investigation, confirmed that some police officers involved with the West case had been counselled. In some police canters, he said, counselling still carried a stigma; but this was changing.

The lawyers' exposure to the West case and the cellar of death at 25 Cromwell Street was, if anything, more detailed than the jury's. An agreement between prosecution and defence had kept some of the worst material from the jury.

Ms Wass commented: "Criminal cases can be harrowing when they involve rape, murder or child abuse. This one concerned multiple instances of all of them." "Everybody, she reflected, had different ways of coping with stress. In her case, within the bounds of confidentiality, she did feel able to talk to colleagues. "I believe," she said, "the Bar is a more supportive profession than you might think."

But Mr Nutting did not think barristers felt comfort-

able discussing personal distress with colleagues, for fear of it being seen as weakness. He had always found it easy to "shut the book" after a case, and was "not convinced" that the Bar Council should provide counselling.

To many versed in psychology, such an attitude is unrealistic. Professor Cooper pointed out that unresolved stress can manifest itself in many ways, in alcoholism, depression, even financial problems. "By suggesting counselling, you're not telling people that they can't cope," he said. "You're informing them of the possibility they may have problems later."

Despite the LCD's enlightened recognition that counselling may help to prevent such problems, there remains a blind pride in the robustness of the legal profession.

The West jurors were discharged and told they need never experience such an ordeal in court again. The lawyers had no such freedom; they continued their career, and a long exposure to human depravity.

Innocent or guilty, it's luck of the law

When they take themselves too seriously, lawyers and judges like to pretend that the legal system is based on objective principles of law and justice which regulate what we may or may not do to each other and to ourselves. In fact, the law is, to a surprisingly large extent, a game of chance determined by good fortune as much as by good judgment, occasionally influenced, as the school of American realists taught in the 1930s, by what the judge had for breakfast.

In some courts, as accurate a prediction of the outcome may be obtained from *Mystic Meg* as from a study of Halsbury's Laws of England. This can be frustrating for those who think they have a strong case, reassuring for those who have been advised that they are in the wrong, and exciting for those who have no stake in the outcome.

For those lawyers and judges who cannot tolerate being deprived for the duration of the Christmas vacation of the potent combination of law and chance supplied by courts up and down the land, Spear's Games has produced an entertaining substitute. *You be the Judge: The Game of Real Life Court Dramas* (£16.99).

Two players, or two teams of players, take it in turns to read from one of 500 cards, each of which describes in about 100 words the central elements of a civil or criminal court case from one of a number of jurisdictions around the world. The opposing player, or team, then has to give the verdict for or against the litigant identified on the card. If you judge the case correctly — that is, if you supply the verdict which was given by the relevant court, and is printed on the back of the card — then you may throw the dice to determine how many moves you travel around the board to the winning post.

You be the Judge may not live up to the claim in the promotional material that it is "the game that'll make you tip your wig". But if played after a large, festive lunch, and the consumption of generous quantities of alcohol, the game certainly bears more than a passing resemblance to proceedings in many courts of law.

Judgment is pronounced on the basis of limited information (the cards frequently tell participants less than they need to know about the facts, the governing law and the date of the case, and sometimes we are not even informed in which country the litigation occurred); the proceedings involve noisy disagreements between all those in court; the verdict of those performing the role of judge is more often wrong than right; the judgment contains

inadequate reasoning (the answers on the cards do not always illuminate why the court reached the result described); and it is likely to provoke bad-tempered expressions of astonishment with accusations of gross incompetence or worse — at least, if the response of my family of two barristers and three barrack-room lawyer children is typical.

Most of the cases described on the cards are exotic specimens that would not normally be encountered in the course of judicial duties. Was Anne entitled to change the locks to exclude her spouse, Seamus, from their apartment because he had not bathed or changed his clothes for weeks? Did a Hawaii court rule in favour of the fees she had paid him when none of his predictions came true? Was a human cannonball entitled to damages from a local TV station when it videotaped and broadcast one of his performances without his permission? The Lord Chancellor's Department is unlikely to abandon the training conferences organised by the Judicial Studies Board and substitute regular sessions in which trainee judges are encouraged to play this board game.

The legal system frowns on any overt link between law and chance. In fiction, Rabelais's Judge Bridlegoose decided cases by throwing dice. But those judges and juries who have sought to imitate that example have been reprimanded for undermining public confidence that legal answers depend on evidence and reason.

In 1677, a verdict was set aside and the jury was fined because, being unable to agree, it decided the case. In 1737, the members of another jury were ordered to attend before the court "to be publicly admonished, that the country may take warning" after they decided their verdict "by hustling half-pence in a hat". A Manhattan criminal court judge was barred from office by the New York State Commission on Judicial Conduct in 1983 for deciding the length of a prison sentence on the toss of a coin.

In a 1964 decision in the Court of Appeal, Lord Justice Diplock asserted that a judge "must not spin a coin" to decide a case. For lawyers conducting a little vacation business, different rules apply. Despite its imperfections, *You be the Judge* is an excellent late Christmas, or Chanukah, present for any lawyer or judge from assistant recorder to law lord, even those who think that the law has nothing to do with luck, good or bad.

● The author is a practising barrister and a Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford.



DAVID PANNICK QC

January
The annual award for Lawyer's Understatement of the Year is given to Leo Goadley, the solicitor of Frederick West's wife, who said: "She did know he was a racist. He was not an angel by any means, and he used to get into trouble in one way or another over the years."

February
The judge who brought his dog to court, prompting complaints from one litigant that the beast's snoring interrupted the case, starts a trend. Judges find it convenient to bring their pets to court rather than leaving them at home to make messes on the carpet. Barristers try to curry favour by bringing poop scoops to court and showing interest in the judge's hamster.

March
City solicitors each donate £5,000 worth of legal work to worthy causes. A spokesman says: "This means a charity can have up to five hours of one of our trainee's time." Lucky recipients include Haringey

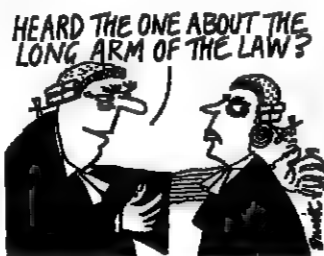
Patrick Stevens offers a month-by-month guide to some of the real and surreal events that marked out 1995

That was the year that nearly was

Women's Refuge (advice on how to minimise tax on overseas earnings). Boating for the Disabled (advice on ship mortgages) and the National Trust (advice on demolition of listed buildings).

April
The Law Society warns solicitors against being involved in fraud. "It's easy to get sucked into it," says a spokesman. "The fraudsters offer enormous fees for very little work and it is very tempting." A clarification is issued after most solicitors think the Law Society is referring to estate agencies.

May
To stop sexual harassment of female applicants for pupillage, the



Bar issues a code of conduct, forbidding pupillage offers from offering sex in return for pupillage. Solicitors also move to improve standards after unprecedented slanging matches in the elections for president of the Law Society. Banned terms include:

Commie lover, Nazi, old bag. "Termagant" is allowed after research shows that the majority of solicitors think it is a kind of African ant.

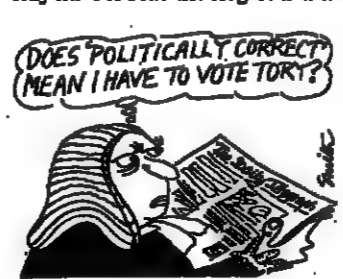
September
Lord Mackay of Clashfern, the Lord Chancellor, accepts a judge's explanation that he did not take cannabis or cocaine before, during or after sex with two prostitutes. The consensus (of judges and those who wish to become one) is that such behaviour, though unacceptable in a magistrate, does not disqualify a judge from trying building disputes.

October
The Lord Chancellor agrees to have

a rethink on a Bill that Tory MPs say gives cohabiting couples the same rights as married ones. The *Daily Telegraph* worries about the prospect of "politically correct judges" and what they might get up to with the new legislation. One solicitor comments: "We're not guaranteed legally correct judges, so a politically correct one would be a definite advantage."

Matthew McCoy, a solicitor who practises in Newbury and is also chairman of the British Horseracing Board, was "restrained" with plastic handcuffs after helping himself to an extra drink on a transatlantic flight. This was followed by his arrest at JFK airport on the ground that he bore the

same name (though presumably not the same appearance) as a Jamaican wanted by the police. Airlines have anxiously reviewed their policies regarding lawyers and inflight drinks. "They're used to doing as they are told and they only have to read the slogan 'Drink



Canada Dry" and they start at the departure lounge," said a spokesman. The problem is that if the plane carries enough drink for them, there is insufficient fuel to get across the Atlantic.

November
After dentists decide to call themselves "Doctor", the legal profession has to decide what its members shall be called. Barristers reject "Your Beatitude" as being difficult for some clients to master and settle for "Your Lordship". Solicitors go for the traditional option of "Yo" for senior solicitors while newly qualified solicitors will be addressed as before with the phrase, "Big Mac and fries, please".

December
After the Maxwell jury gets three weeks' holiday for Christmas, other juries seek similar privileges. Trials around the country grind to a halt as juries demand hampers and a Christmas bonus.

British lawyers working in Paris showed the Dunkirk spirit when a series of strikes against the Government brought most of France to a standstill

How to survive during the French revolution

Life is returning to normal for those British lawyers based in Paris who have been suffering the effects of weeks of French strikes. They are now recovering from shutdowns in transport and the post, and upheavals in other sectors, all of which disrupted the daily management of lawyers' offices.

When the stoppages started, it did not take long for British lawyers to adjust to these strained circumstances. Harvey Chalmers, the local managing partner of Simmons &

Simmons, says: "The Dunkirk spirit soon surfaced. We may have had our backs to the wall, but we coped wonderfully."

One firm, Norton Rose, is producing a commemorative sweatshirt for those who saw active service in its Paris office during the strikes. Two other English law firms have been boasting of the dedication of their secretaries, who were walking for four hours in the morning to reach the office, and four hours back home in the evening, in order to beat the lack of public transport

and the car jams on the roads.

The effects of the strikes on the practical management of offices such as Clifford Chance and Simmons & Simmons was considerable. One firm reckoned that it had cost almost £8,000 in extra expenses for overnight hotel stays and taxi fares. Post office strikes and the transport shutdowns meant that no cheques were coming in — and no invoices going out.

Yet most firms doing international transactions managed to maintain their normal

workload. Fax and e-mail were unaffected by the strikes and their continued use meant that the lawyers' international clients could still receive written communications — and that France Telecom earned a lot of money.

Banking lawyers went to meetings by bicycle rather than by taxi, and the wheels of high finance continued to turn. Work hours were shifted. For example, the day did not start until 11am and ended later in order to avoid the worst of the traffic jams.

In Los Angeles, in the wake of the earthquake, many lawyers "commuted" from home by computer to their networked offices. But in Paris, very few British lawyers based there have adapted to that way of working.

Mr Chalmers says: "We've been considering the possibility of linking up lawyers' homes to the office for some time, but have not got around to doing it. The strikes, however, have made us think about it more urgently."

Deborah Clark, a partner at Norton Rose, says that the volume of work accomplished actually increased because colleagues were arriving earlier and leaving later. But she adds: "I have to say that I see no effect on business confidence in France. I specialise in international asset finance and there is no indication that this work has been affected."

Harder hit, perhaps, were those firms doing mainstream commercial work, such as Fidal, the legal arm of the accountants KPMG. With about 1,000 lawyers, of whom a quarter are based in Paris, it is the largest law firm in France.



Workers protest against cuts proposed by Alain Juppé, the French Prime Minister, below

Kristin Defert is an international mergers and acquisitions lawyer with Fidal. During the strikes, many of her overseas visitors were forced to cancel their trips to Paris and deals were stalled as people could not get to meetings. She says: "Many of our clients had a lot of practical problems on their minds because of the strikes, and therefore deferred visits to their lawyers."

Her view is that the strikes could be bad for the French economy in the short term as investments are held back. The real issue, for her, is whether the Government can implement its reforms, includ-

ing changes to employment law. "If the Prime Minister is successful," she says, "France will become more attractive for overseas investors."

Klein-Goddard is the French wing of Theodore Goddard, Jean-Yves Martin, a partner in the French firm, says the strikes were "not perceived as a problem" by the business community.

However, French people in general are not forming opinions until they know whether the unions, after their negotiations with Alain Juppé, the Prime Minister, will decide to strike again this month.

EDWARD FENNELL



QUEEN'S COUNSEL



STEUART & FRANCIS

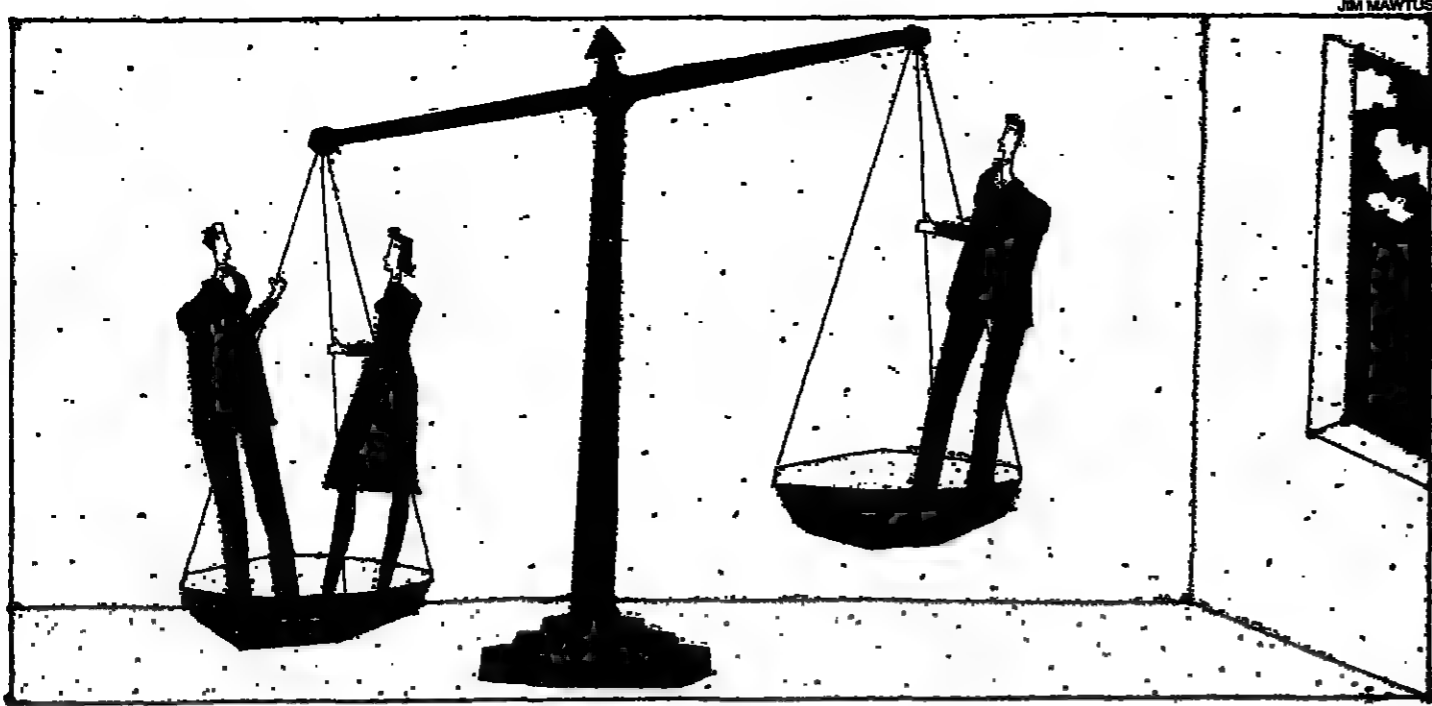


STEUART & FRANCIS



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Consider your verdict

What happens when magistrates retire to decide a case? Every magistrate's court has a "retiring room". No, it's not somewhere where pensioned-off JPs browse quietly among dusty papers, but a room in which lay magistrates consider their verdict and/or sentence. (Stipendiary magistrates have their own rooms.) They do this without assistance, although they may ask the clerk to give them advice on the law. Apart from this, the clerk takes no part in the decision-making.

After the defendant has pleaded "Not guilty" and prosecution and defence evidence has been heard, it is neither practicable nor desirable for magistrates to discuss the pros and cons of the evidence in open court. Hence the use of the retiring room, where privacy is ensured. Such is the importance attached to this privacy that every effort is made to ensure that only one bench of magistrates is in the room at any one time: ie, there is never any cross-input between different benches. Even royalty is excluded from the retiring room, as one royal visitor found out when he was politely told during an official visit to a court that he couldn't "listen in" to a bench discussing a case that he had been following in court.

When the three magistrates reach the retiring room, the chairman will, without indicating any

How do magistrates reach a verdict?
Derek Edmunds talks out of court

view on the guilt or innocence of the defendant, ask the least experienced magistrate whether, on the evidence, he or she finds the case "proved" or "not proved"; whether the defendant is guilty or not guilty. After the other magistrate has given his view, the chairman will give his. If the views are unanimous, the magistrates return to the court to announce the verdict. If, however, the three views are not unanimous, a more detailed study of the evidence will be made: all three magistrates discuss the evidence they have heard. If the verdict is still split 2:1 after this discussion, and the chairman considers that further discussion will not change this, that is how it is left.

The magistrates then return to the court, where the chairman announces the verdict. No indication of whether or not the verdict is unanimous is ever given.

If the verdict is "Guilty", then the magistrates will be given details of any previous convictions. The magistrates will, however, ignore "old" convictions and "irrelevant"

convictions. For example, if the defendant has been found guilty of assaulting a police officer, a previous conviction for, say, speeding would be ignored because it is not a "violent" offence.

The Bench may then retire a second time to consider the punishment. The Magistrates' Association issues guidelines giving "entry points" for most offences; for example, custody for assaulting a police officer; a fine for careless driving. This time, therefore, discussion in the retiring room will centre on the appropriateness of the "entry point" punishment, which can be modified for many reasons: eg, first offence/long conviction record or offence committed on impulse/premeditated. As before, the chairman will lead his colleagues through a "structured decision process" which will review the available punishment options.

At the top end of the scale are those sentences that "restrict personal freedom", such as a custodial (prison) sentence or a Community Service Order (CSO), under which

the defendant works for the community. At the bottom end is an absolute discharge, whereby the defendant is free to go. A punishment is necessary. Between the two limits lies a punishment that is appropriate to the offence, which may, of course, be modified by "mitigating circumstances", such as when the defendant has expressed remorse, or has pleaded "Guilty" at the earliest opportunity.

Should a prison sentence or CSO be considered appropriate, the magistrates will almost certainly ask for a pre-sentence report (PSR). If that happens, the case will be adjourned for the probation service to prepare the PSR. When it is received, a final visit to the retiring room will be made to consider its contents and decide the punishment. If requested by them, the same bench of magistrates can deal with this, but the court rota system usually means that a different bench passes sentence.

Hearing the case in open court is only one part of the judicial process: an objective and unbiased discussion of the evidence presented by both sides is essential if a correct verdict is to be reached by magistrates, and a fair punishment imposed. The retiring room enables such a discussion to be carried out by magistrates in complete privacy, with the freedom of expression and independent thought that such privacy brings.

Is client-chasing for civil cases costing the taxpayer too much?

Marty Day's objection to the Lord Chancellor's, Lord Woolf's and the Legal Aid Board's belated attempts to control the expenditure of civil legal aid (see "A Win for the Goliaths?" *The Times*, December 5, 1995) fits like a glove with his and his firm, Leigh Day & Co's propensity to campaign and litigate, often at the British taxpayers' expense.

That Mr Day and his colleagues feel that their approach is for their clients' and the public good is beyond question. Whether or not they and other plaintiffs' solicitors, some of whom are more robust than Leigh Day & Co in seeking out clients, are blinkered in their clients' and their own professional and financial causes is worthy of debate.

What motivates law firms to seek out personal injury claimants and even, in some cases (but not Leigh Day's), to buy the names of accident victims from middlemen? Is it really irrefutable in an era of Citizens Advice Bureaux, neighbourhood law centres and a press keen to expose injustice and to encourage redress, that there is a large group of potential claimants who but for campaigning lawyers would not recognise their right to pursue claims? Can they owe a duty to clients whom they do not yet have? Are they wholly uninfluenced by the business benefits to them of multi-plaintiff litigation funded by the public purse?

This shopping for clients whose causes are often paid for by the British taxpayer is not confined to these shores. Richard Meeran, a partner in Leigh Day & Co, has also complained about his firm's failure to persuade the English courts that it should be permitted, with the benefit of English legal aid, to run an expensive claim against a UK headquartered multinational corporation arising out of an accident suffered by a Scot while resident and working in Namibia.

Leigh Day & Co is not alone in seeking to run claims for foreigners who might nevertheless qualify for legal aid support to pursue cases in the English courts. Fresh Cartwright, one of the leading law firms in transnational litigation in England, tried - in vain - to run several individual claims by New Zealanders on the basis that legal aid for such claims was not available to them in their own country.

Leigh Day & Co, as one of the very best of specialist plaintiffs' law firms, has enjoyed many notable successes, but to claim, as Mr Day does, that the "failed on all counts" group action, brought on behalf of childhood leukaemia victims around the Sellafield nuclear plant, has been a triumph for British

Who loses in the legal aid stakes?



Lord Woolf belated attempt to control costs of civil justice

justice in giving the weaponry to the Davids to take on the corporate Goliaths, breathtakingly overlooks the fact that the hopes of the claimants and their families were raised and dashed, using immense amounts of public money. No mention, of course, of the justice of those claims having been refused by an experienced judge after all the available evidence had been considered.

To suggest that the estimated £30 million of taxpayers' money spent on transnational litigation is acceptable simply because not all group actions succeed, glosses over the question of whether that and other unsuccessful actions should have been run at all or withdrawn sooner. Certainly, no regard appears to have been paid to the report published in May 1994 by the Legal Aid Board distancing itself from any blame over the millions in public funds spent on funding the 13,000 transnational claims that were subsequently found not to be worth pursuing.

The board pointed its finger at our civil justice system and procedures (as if neither it nor the solicitors it was funding appreciated the obstacle course that lay ahead of them), and at some of the

plaintiffs' solicitors involved. Of them, the board said "there is no incentive on the solicitors to act as a responsible filter for dubious cases, as there is no effective sanction available to the funder, the board, for shoddy work or for bad cases being taken. The board has to rely on the assisted person's legal advisers to act responsibly and competently... clearly, these types of actions are generating lots of weak or hopeless cases." Among the factors which it quoted as tending to cause this were:

● The fact that a number of these claims have been publicly generated, either by solicitor advertising or by the media.

● What can only be described as a "bandwagon" effect: plaintiffs and legal advisers getting carried away by everything surrounding the action and losing sight of the viability of individual cases.

There must be some boundaries to the concept of access to justice. Some controls must be exercised over those whose partisanship might otherwise cause them to over-commit to their own pet causes. The Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor of Gosford, Lord Woolf, and even the Lord Chancellor's Department are trying their best not to tilt civil legal aid towards or against plaintiffs or defendants. They are undoubtedly well up with professional litigators writing and acting on their own script and, in some cases, paying only lip service to the Legal Aid Board as funders.

As I can testify from personal experience, no private enterprise, whether the corporate Goliath or an insurance company, or an individual paying for his or her own representation, fails to apply a cost-benefit test before deciding whether to embark on or defend civil litigation. This means that their regular solicitors know that they will not be thanked or retained again if they are less than pragmatic about the merits of this or that case.

In the transnational litigation, I am in a position to know that neither major corporate defendant was taken by surprise about the extent of their exposure to successfully spent defence costs, whereas the £30 million-plus bill now confronting the Legal Aid Board seems not to have been wholly expected.

Beware the special pleadings of those who might have a vested interest in the unlimited funding of litigation.

DAVID A. MCINTOSH

● The author is senior partner of Davies Arnold Cooper, which has acted for defendants in such cases.

LEGAL APPOINTMENTS

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS...

ASSET FINANCE

Are you looking for a lead role and real potential partnership? If you are and have between 3-6 years' exp in asset finance then this first rate City practice would like to hear from you. You will work as part of a general banking department and assume responsibility for it. Ref: T25248

COICO

Southampton To £Outstanding Heavy-weight regional practice seeks company/commercial lawyers with 4-6 years' exp to undertake a varied caseload of corporate transactions, including acquisitions and disposals and joint ventures. With proven marketing skills and a desire to play a lead role in the success of the department this one is a must. Ref: T21888

TRADEMARKS

An unusual opportunity. Premier City practice is now looking to recruit a trademark specialist to join its prestigious department. A real challenge because whoever gets this role will have the opportunity to manage and take a firm from the position. Ref: T25946

SENIOR IN-HOUSE

Thames Valley To £Excellent Major global engineering group seeks senior lawyer to support the Director of Legal Affairs. Work load will consist of a high volume of merger, acquisition and disposal work. With at least eight years' exp from a major City firm or the manufacturing industry, you will be a proactive and commercially-minded lawyer seeking a fresh challenge. Ref: T19584

INSURANCE

Leading insurance practice now seeking 0-2 years' exp solicitor to deal primarily with policy wording and coverage disputes, product liability and property claims. Litigation experience is essential and candidates must have excellent academic record and strong personality. Ref: T23128

PROPERTY LITIGATION

Refusing To £Partnership Excellent opportunity to join this major regional practice to be based in their Reading office. With between 5-7 years' exp, you will have gained excellent broad-based property litigation experience to date including landlord and tenant. If you are an ambitious and motivated lawyer, there are definite partnership prospects. Ref: T20714

SECURITIES

Major City firm with an excellent reputation in this field seeks high quality securities and non-contentious banking lawyers with between 3-6 years' exp. In addition to mainstream banking experience, you will have gained first-class regulatory exposure. Excellent opportunity to join a major player in the field. Ref: T19879

PROPERTY

Outstanding opportunity for a 2-3 year qualified commercial property lawyer with a City or regional firm background to join a leading City firm. The workload will include a broad range of property led transactions and corporate support. Excellent experience and academic ability are absolutely essential. Ref: T15948

US BANK - SINGAPORE

To £Excellent Exceptional opportunity to work in the Singapore office of this leading US based merchant bank. Opportunities for lawyers with at least 4 years' exp other to undertake capital markets/general banking work or compliance and private banking matters, working closely with other offices within the region. With relevant experience truly dynamic and commercial individuals should apply. Ref: T25841

INSOLVENCY

Leading City Firm, now seeks non-contentious insolvency lawyers with between 2-5 years' experience to join its banking department. Outstanding opportunity for suitably qualified and first rate individuals to work for one of the most enviable client bases in the City and to undertake a diverse and high profile workload. Good prospects. Ref: T24898

PROPERTY

To £42,000 Major City firm with an excellent reputation in this field seeks high quality securities and non-contentious banking lawyers with between 3-6 years' exp. In addition to mainstream banking experience, you will have gained first-class regulatory exposure. Excellent opportunity to join a major player in the field. Ref: T19879

SECURITIES

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1996 LONDON & TOKYO

CORPORATE PARTNER

Highly regarded and profitable medium-sized City firm seeks additional partner to add gravitas and profile to the Corporate Department. Firm has excellent media and PR related clients offering substantial opportunities to cross-sell as well as strong international associations. New recruit will play a key role in developing the corporate profile and strong practice development skills will be crucial. A following is not essential. Excellent and supportive working environment and remuneration at the top end of City rates. (Ref: T4628)

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Highly reputable City practice with strong reputation in pensions and employment work seeks to fill perceived "gap" in its practice by the recruitment of a senior lawyer with depth employee benefits experience as a partner designate to develop the firm's practice in this area. Outstanding quality of current employment and pensions clients provides significant opportunity for cross-selling. Firm has the strongest possible long term commitment to this specialisation. (Ref: T5120)

JAPANESE

New opening in medium-sized City firm with international office network. Client is raising current head of Tokyo office back to London and is seeking a senior associate or junior partner capable of replacing him. Ideal candidate will have spent a minimum of 2 years working in Tokyo. Practice areas is varied and exciting. Candidates sought must be sufficiently entrepreneurial to see managing and developing this office as an exciting challenge. (Ref: T5124)

BANKING

Relatively recently formed Banking Department at top City practice seeks additional lawyer with 2-5 years' banking experience. Field of work will include single lender and syndicated loans, projects and some commercial mortgages for UK and foreign lenders. Within the firm's 5 year business plan, significant growth in the Banking Department is one of the key priorities. As a result, prospects in this area are genuinely very good. (Ref: T5158)

SEC PARTNER DESIGNATE

Medium-sized central London practice with very stable partnership and unusual range of coffee activity is seeking an SEC specialist to give them high level support in this area. There is already a significant caseload to undertake and the firm (which has a Brussels office) believes that the next 5 years will see major growth in SEC related instructions from existing clients. Ideal candidate will be 4-6 years qualified, trained at a top 10 City firm and have spent at least a year living and working in Brussels. (Ref: T6088)

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NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

COMMERCIAL LITIGATION

To £29,000 2 to 4 years' exp/qualified A rare opportunity has arisen for a general commercial litigator to join one of the City's premier contentious departments. A combination of technical ability, good experience and commercial acumen is essential. This is an excellent opportunity. T.9153.

COMMERCIAL

To £23,000 A bright and motivated lawyer is actively being sought to handle commercial (not corporate) work at one of the City's most forward-thinking practices. Heavyweight client base and involves a great deal of client contact. T.8954.

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To £25,000 Medium-sized West End firm, which is particularly well-known for property litigation work, now requires a junior assistant. This specialist litigation team handles a wide range of matters including mortgage actions and landlord and tenant work for numerous lenders. T.9164.

COMPANY/COMMERCIAL - DUBAI

To £25,000 The Middle East office of top City firm requires an assistant to undertake a broad range of work including joint ventures, takeovers, distribution agreements and employment contracts. Top twenty City firm background is required. T.9138.

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To £22,000 2 years' exp/qualified A rare opportunity has arisen for a general administrative expert, preferably with a banking background, to join this established team. The majority of the practice's work is of an international nature. Marketing skills important. T.8769.

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To £22,000 Singapore City firm with substantial office in Singapore now requires additional assistants with two to five years' experience of general banking/finance work. Project finance knowledge is a particular advantage. Opportunity to return to London or other offices, if desired. T.8743.

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To £22,000 2 to 4 years' exp/qualified City practice with an enviable record of growth in the last five years, requires an additional assistant for the Employment Group to handle both contentious and non-contentious work. Employment experience from City or large provincial firm is required. T.9132.

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Market in gilt-edged repos opens for business

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

THE new market in gilt-edged "repos" begins today, with great hopes at the Bank of England of new dynamism in the British government bond market, greater liquidity and, therefore, lower borrowing costs for the Government.

The Bank announced in February that it was setting up a market in gilt repos, bringing the British govern-

ment bond market up to date with other, highly successful markets such as the Treasury bond market in America. Sterling has rallied, in the admittedly thin trading period between Christmas and New Year, partly traders say, because of additional interest among foreign investors in the British gilt market ahead of the new repo system.

Other leading foreign bond markets already operate repo systems and have a higher proportion of

overseas investment in government bonds than the British market. The Treasury estimates that it could eventually save £25 million a year in public spending for every one basis point off gilt yields.

A repo is the sale of a bond with an agreement to repurchase it at a fixed price and time in the future. In effect, one party lends a certain amount of gilts to the other in return for cash. The cash a player gets in return for gilts can be used to finance trading in

other kinds of instruments. As things stand, holders of gilts can lend gilts in return for a fee but, unless they are authorised gilt-edged market-makers, they are not allowed to borrow stock and therefore take out short positions in the market. In the new market, this facility will be available to institutional investors.

The innovation of the new gilt repo market will, it is hoped, provide not only more liquidity for investors in British government bonds but a

more flexible instrument for traders in different financial instruments.

With a much larger than expected forecast for the public sector borrowing requirement next year, the Bank is under ever greater pressure to make the gilt market attractive to investors.

In the Budget, the Chancellor forecast a PSBR of £22.5 billion for the forthcoming tax year compared with £16 billion predicted in the Treasury's summer forecast.

Businesses expecting bumpy start to new year

By PHILIP PANGALOS AND JANET BUSH

BRITISH businesses remain cautious on prospects and are braced for a bumpy ride as the harsh economic climate continues to restrict profit growth, and gloomy forecasts predict a slowdown in exports and growth.

A survey by Lloyds Bank says that businesses are finding it difficult to accept and adapt to a low inflation climate, with growth below expectations and an increase in cashflow difficulties sapping their confidence.

The twice-yearly survey, which polled more than 2,000 businesses in November and December, shows that many were disappointed by slower than expected growth in order books, prompting slower prof-

it growth in 1995. As a result, business confidence is at its lowest since the Lloyds survey began in 1992.

A confidence index, based on expectations for order books, sales and profitability for the next six months, was eight points lower than six months ago. In addition, for the first time since the survey began, there has been an increase in those reporting cashflow problems and a slowdown in export orders.

The survey showed a growth in order books, with 43 per cent of companies reporting higher orders, compared to 17 per cent reporting lower orders. However, there were fewer companies reporting higher orders, and more reporting a fall in orders. The construction and retail sectors saw the slowest growth in order books, while manufacturing and hotels and catering reported a boom period.

Michael Riding, director of commercial banking at Lloyds Bank, said: "Although businesses say they feel less confident than six months ago... order books are actually continuing to grow, although at a lower rate than at the peak of the cycle in 1994."

However, Mr Riding added: "While they are still experiencing growth, they are having difficulty in coming to terms with managing a low inflation economy. This, coupled with failed growth expectations, has made them somewhat pessimistic, possibly unnecessarily."

Meanwhile, Cambridge Econometrics expects British growth to slow to around 2.5 per cent this year, compared with about 2.75 per cent in 1995, despite a modest acceleration in consumer spending.

The private forecasters said that spending should pick up a little this year and then grow more strongly in 1997 in response to larger tax cuts than most assume will happen in next year's Budget. But there will be a weaker contribution to growth from net trade as world economic activity slows and British imports recover from the unusually slow rate of growth early in 1995.

Cambridge Econometrics assumes that investment will pick up this year on the expectation that projects under the Government's Private Finance Initiative will find much of the gap left by cuts in public capital spending.

Daiwa Bank plans for US plea bargaining

By OUR CITY STAFF

JAPAN'S scandal-hit Daiwa Bank plans to plea bargain with US federal authorities next month over the 24 counts of fraud filed against it, the *Asahi Shimbun* reported yesterday.

The bank hopes to bring the case to a settlement by the end of March, when it does its books for fiscal 1995, the newspaper quoted a Daiwa official as saying.

It also quoted a senior official of Sumitomo Bank, another leading Japanese commercial bank, as saying that it planned to start talks with Daiwa in April at the earliest on a possible merger after the conclusion of the plea bargaining.

In November, the US Federal Reserve expelled Daiwa Bank from the United States for allegedly trying to disguise \$1.1 billion in losses due to fraudulent US Treasury bond trading by a trader at its New York branch. Sumitomo has agreed to take over the US operations of Daiwa and hinted at the possibility of a merger between the two banks.

Asahi Shimbun said that Daiwa Bank was expected to plead not guilty to the fraud charges, in its documents to be submitted to US regulators on January 8.



The New York exchange in Wall Street was the only market to outperform UK equities

UK pension funds surge to enjoy a vintage year

By MARTIN BARROW

UK PENSION funds surged ahead in 1995, with annual returns of 19 per cent reflecting strong advances in equities and bonds.

Funds recovered strongly from their poor showing in 1994, according to the preliminary annual survey by the WM Company, tracking the performance of more than 80 per cent of the UK pension fund market. Despite the setback in 1994, pension funds have averaged more than 15 per cent each year compared to retail price inflation of about 3 per cent. Over 20 years, average returns have exceeded inflation by about 7 per cent.

UK equities provided a return of 24 per cent, a figure exceeded only by the United States, where equities recorded returns of 34 per cent. The 1995 average return from Japanese equities of less than 2 per cent highlighted the recent roller coaster behaviour of the Japanese market.

However, over a five-year period, UK equities, with returns of more than 16 per cent, have been beaten by every leading overseas equity region with the exception of Japan. WM calculates that Europe returned 17 per cent, North America 20 per cent and the Pacific, excluding Japan, 27 per cent. Japan trailed badly at 11 per cent.

Falling worldwide interest rates fuelled the performance by bonds. Returns on UK bonds of 15 per cent were overshadowed by foreign competition, with overseas bonds seeing returns of 21 per cent.

Property, a star performer in 1994, recorded a disappointing return of 5 per cent. WM said hedging activity also increased in 1995, with managers varying their exposure during the course of the year. "This was particularly apparent in the Japanese market, with many managers hedging between one third and two thirds of their yen exposure," said Peter Warrington, a director of WM.

Locker faces fight over Pentre

By MARTIN BARROW

THOMAS Locker Holdings, the engineering company, faces growing opposition to the proposed reverse takeover by Pentre Group.

John Carr, the largest single shareholder in Thomas Locker with almost 23 per cent of the ordinary voting stock, is calling on other investors to vote against the £7.5 million purchase of privately-owned Pentre at an extraordinary meeting on January 10. Thom-

as Locker is capitalised at £3 million.

Pentre, established in 1988, manufactures reels, drums and specialised machinery for the wire and cable industry. If the deal goes ahead, Philip Gartside, the chairman, will become chief executive of the enlarged Thomas Locker, and Michael Seymour will be managing director, the post he holds in Pentre.

However, Mr Carr is advis-

ing shareholders to reject the proposal. He says that the acquisition overvalues Pentre and undervalues Thomas Locker and will involve change of control without payment of a bid premium.

Thomas Locker has net cash, but Pentre is burdened with heavy borrowing, the consequence of its acquisition-driven strategy, Mr Carr says. Finally, he claims that the transaction costs are high and

that the deal would link two businesses that do not fit.

Mr Carr, who is advised by KPMG Manchester, emerged as Thomas Locker's largest single investor in May after buying shares from three relatives of the founder. He is also opposing the terms of the proposed enfranchisement of Locker's "A" ordinary shares, claiming that investors are not being adequately compensated for dilution of voting rights.

Indian telecoms setback

INDIA'S efforts to privatise the telephone system suffered another setback yesterday when a second round of tenders to provide basic telecom services were received from private joint-venture firms for only five of the 13

states on offer. The six companies submitting bids with their Indian partners were Moscow Telecom, Bell Atlantic and Nynex Corp of the United States, Bell Canada, Set Corp of Italy and NTT of Japan.

Gilts exceed expectations

TOTAL returns from gilts in calendar 1995 (allowing for inflation) were in the top quartile of those recorded over the past 77 years. This was not the expectation at the start of the year. Then, consensus forecasts expected gilt yields to be broadly unchanged over the 12-month period. They also expected inflation to average 3.3 per cent and a PSBR for the fiscal year of £21 billion.

The inflation outcome has been virtually spot on this expectation. A higher PSBR can be accounted for by economic growth undershooting expectations by 0.8 per cent.

It is therefore difficult to account for this performance, looking at the main domestic economic factors. A more convincing explanation lies overseas, for it is in Germany and particularly the US that bond performances have been much better than expected. It is also here that economic growth proved to be much weaker than forecasters envisaged a year ago.

The net result has been strong performances from all bond markets, but the spread of UK yields relative to those elsewhere has tended to widen. The surprise factors in the UK were clearly not as great as those on the Continent or in other Anglo economies.

This is itself a surprise, since more of an emphasis is being placed on the impact that demographic factors are having on government finances. The potential consequences to government

deficits of having unfunded pension schemes was well illustrated in an OECD analysis published last summer. The United Kingdom's position is extremely favourable since we have tackled this particular problem by encouraging private-sector pension provisions.

Even though only half the population is covered by these schemes, the projections for future budget deficits in the UK are considerably more favourable than in most other OECD countries. Why has the gilt market not yet reflected

GILT-EDGED

this relative advantage? The main answer is that it has been preoccupied with concerns about the current budget deficit (especially in the run up to the Budget). This is understandable.

At the start of this decade, the underlying or cyclically adjusted budget deficit was approaching levels not seen since the mid-1970s. Although the overall deficit reduced through the 1980s (recording a surplus during the economic boom of the late Eighties), the underlying picture was one of deterioration. Hence by the start of this decade, we were faced with a fiscal position that was as great a concern for the current administration as the one faced by Labour politicians two decades ago.

On both occasions, fiscal policy had to

be put into reverse, and the past three budgets have had one thing in common, namely, aiming to restore the underlying budget deficit to a more sustainable position. On current trends, this structural deficit should be down to 2½ per cent of GDP in 1996. This represents considerable progress from three years earlier when an underlying deficit of 6 per cent was recorded. It also represented a reassurance that political pressure to produce exceptional tax cuts was resisted in November's Budget.

However, the projected deficit is still higher than those expected for the US and Germany next year, and still a long way from the norm of the 1950s, when the underlying deficit was in balance. The relevance of this last observation lies with the fact that the average inflation rate in the 1950s was almost the same as that recorded so far in the 1990s. The underlying deficits, however, are very different.

Expectations of further progress are also influenced by the outcome of the next election. Labour politicians are keen to emphasise their desire to pursue credible fiscal policies, but markets still require a risk premium to reflect their concern. The net result is that it seems unlikely that much progress will be made in the months ahead to reduce the spread of gilt yields over other leading nations.

MICHAEL HUGHES
Barclays de Zotte Wedd

CHANGE ON WEEK

THE POUND

US dollar 1.5572 (+0.0157)
German mark 2.2299 (+0.0097)
Exchange index 83.1 (+0.1)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 2690.1 (+29.6)
FT-SE 100 2689.3 (+31.0)
New York Dow Jones 5117.12 (+19.15)
Tokyo Nikkei Avge 18868.15 (+123.73)

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.17	2.01
Austria Sch	18.69	15.19
Belgium Fr	48.77	44.47
Canada \$	2.215	2.056
Cyprus Cyp£	0.747	0.692
Denmark Kr	9.24	8.44
Finland Mk	7.33	6.88
France Fr	8.03	7.38
Germany Dm	2.38	2.17
Greece Dr	389.00	364.00
Hong Kong \$	12.52	11.82
Ireland Pt	1.02	0.94
Israel Shk	5.2600	4.6100
Italy Lira	2563.00	2408.00
Japan Yen	173.70	157.70
Malta	0.582	0.537
Netherlands Gld	2.847	2.417
New Zealand \$	2.51	2.29
Norway Kr	10.44	9.84
Portugal Esc	244.00	225.50
S Africa Rd	ref.	5.40
Spain Pta	195.50	182.50
Sweden Kr	10.97	10.17
Switzerland Fr	1.92	1.74
Turkey Lira	ref.	91103.0
USA \$	1.846	1.516

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank PLC. Other rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trade on Friday.

Labour puts energy into power reform

Christine Buckley on the opposition party's widest-ranging policy review

Over the next few days, letters from a range of industrialists and academics will begin to drop on the office doormat of Margaret Beckett, Labour's Trade and Industry Secretary.

The letters will be replies to invitations to join one of Labour's widest-ranging, and arguably one of its most important, policy reviews.

Labour has begun work on a shake-up of the regulatory framework covering Britain's energy. With the input of a variety of industry specialists, the party is starting to sculpt what it will implement.

Orchestrating the task is John Battle, the recently appointed Shadow Minister for Energy. He is almost evangelical about the challenge that lies before him believing the present regulatory structures governing electricity, gas and water to be in a mess and to be incomprehensible to the consumers who buy the services.

"Regulation so far has failed the customer. Certainly it has on price but also in other ways. In the summer we had the force of the electricity distribution review. In winter Ofwat has largely stood back and watched things happen, saying that it couldn't intervene. We've had a hell of a lot of complaints about gas. All in all we've not had great satisfaction. The regulators seem to be stuck on the price formula. They may be struggling to maintain a fair price formula but meanwhile we are just not getting the customer back-up that we had before."

Regulation, says Mr Battle, has proven a scrappy affair that has not responded effectively to the takeover frenzy which has transformed the industry in the space of a few months. He condemns the referral of the bids by National Power and PowerGen to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission while other takeovers such as those by North West Water of Norweb and that by Welsh Water of South Wales Electricity received no such scrutiny in spite of the fears from consumer groups over one company providing two essential services.

"All of the initial bids should have been referred so that the ground rules for

takeovers in the utilities were established. While PowerGen and National Power are out of the frame having a dialogue with the Monopolies and Mergers Commission we can easily see more American companies moving in." The answer could lie in having just one regulator served by a panel of advisers. Such an arrangement would address some of the problems of fragmentation and be a suitable response to a converging energy market.

There are no easy answers to power regulation which demands a tricky balance of satisfying customers with lower bills and better service; serving up growing dividends for shareholders; and delivering a decent tax return to the Government. But there is a growing urgency for answers.

Labour will hardly have time to wipe its feet on the doormat if it enters government in 1997 before full competition in the energy market erupts the following year. The big bang in 1998 will plunge power into a wholly different world as internationalisation of the market gathers pace. Mr Battle is not saying who over the next few weeks will start to provide those answers when the regulation review gets fully under way.

It is certain, however, that a key figure will be Dr Dieter Helm, the Oxford University energy strategist who provoked the anger of Professor Stephen Littlechild, the electricity regulator, when he declared that regulation was in crisis. He has repeatedly criticised the pricing formula clamped on utilities which caps prices at a level related to inflation - RPI-X.

A punishing windfall tax, that was much vaunted several months ago, may now not be implemented or at least applied in a mild fashion. Labour is mindful of the overseas earnings capacity of the utilities and the benefits they could have on the balance of payments.

Mr Battle adds: "We would want to support that. They would be bringing foreign currency and other benefits back to Britain. They would be vital and dynamic international businesses and we wouldn't want to do anything to damage that."

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 24

BOBACHEE (b) A male cook. Corruption of the Hindi *bāwarchī*. "And every night and morning! The Bobachee he shall kill! The sempiternal Moorchee! And we'll all have a grill."

GOMPA (c) A Tibetan temple or monastery. An adaptation of the Tibetan *gōn-pa* a solitary place or hermitage. "A gompa, one of those religious establishments whose walls housed more than a fifth of Tibetan males."

DUNNAMANY (a) A colloquial form of rendering "I don't know how many" or "I don't know how much." Rudyard Kipling, *Puck*, 1906: "The Pharisees just about flowed down the beach to the boat. / dunnamany of 'em."

BURSICULATE (b) Resembling a purse or pouch, bursiform, purse-shaped. From the Latin *bursicula* diminutive of *bursa* a purse. "You are a fine figure of a man, sir. But what I admire about you most is your bursiculateness."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE
1 Rxe7? Kxe7 (1... Rxd1? 2 Rxe4? 2 Re1 and White emerges two pawns ahead with an easy win.

informative:

With effect from 2 January 96, the following changes apply

Cheque Rate			
Cheque Account rate for agreed overdrafts up to £250	14.4%	EAR 15.3%	
Cheque Account rate for agreed overdrafts over £250	17.4%	EAR 18.8%	
Prémier Cheque Account	9.5%	EAR 9.9%	
Cheque Account and Prémier Cheque Account rate for unauthorised borrowing	22.8%	EAR 25.3%	

High Interest Savings Account			
Interest	Rate	Gross Cash	Net Cash
£1-2,499	3.75	3.82	2.81
£2,500-24,999	4.00	4.07	3.00
£25,000-99,999	4.75	4.85	3.56
£100,000+	5.50	5.64	4.13

60 Day Account			
Interest	Gross	Gross Cash	Net Cash
£1-2,499	0.50	0.50	0.38
£2,500-24,999	5.50	5.60	4.13
£25,000-99,999	6.00	6.00	4.50
£100,000+	6.50	6.50	4.88

TESSA			
Interest	Gross (p.p.a.)	Net (p.p.a.)	Tax free
All credit balances	6.75		

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This morning, Sir Rocco Forte will announce the final elements in a surprisingly impressive defence against the £3.2 billion takeover bid mounted by Granada's Gerry Robinson. The outcome will still depend on how far Granada is prepared to raise its offer and what its own shareholders think of that. When Mr Robinson launched his offensive, however, he surely did not expect so vigorous a response. Forte's plans would give immediate returns to patient shareholders, concentrate the business on hotels, improve finances, give up low-return investments that owed more to family pride than hard-nosed judgment and accelerate restructuring of the hotel business.

Whatever the outcome, that package shows the value that takeover bids can bring shareholders. Sir Rocco might have done most of this anyway. But the steady progress of years has been crammed into a programme drawn up and presented in weeks. Who knows whether such drastic action would be best for the long-term future of the business, or whether speed is always a virtue. If investors' demands reflect economic efficiency, however, the ability of outsiders to challenge incumbent management is plainly valuable.

Even Wall Street, home of the takeover bid, was impressed by the merger boom that hit London in 1995. Swaths of industry — such as pharmaceuticals, investment banking and electricity supply — are being restructured at an amazing

Takeover addicts thrill to another fun-packed year



budgeted, or find that the economic recovery was petering out. Easier to expand by buying another business. Sure enough, takeovers boomed while capital investment disappointed, fulfilling the prophecy that growth would peter out.

On the Continent or in Japan, such speed is rarely possible, except via state intervention or financial collapse. In Britain, companies worth more than £40 billion changed hands in a single year. There will probably be as many bids in 1996, even if the total value is lower. Likely industries include water, food, retail banking, insurance, leisure and construction.

Relatively few, however, will revolve round the issues of management at the centre of the Granada-Forte affair. More will be vehicles for restructuring industries in change. Even more will be driven by purely financial motives — tax gains or conglomerate buying companies with low-rated profits. But most takeovers will simply be a low-risk form of expansion.

Last year's takeover boom was accurately predicted by thinking stock market analysts. The corporate sector was becoming more flush with cash and unused borrowing power than ever. But fearful companies were not ready to risk new products, new factories or outlets for fear that they would misjudge markets, spend more than they

controversial takeover plans this year, while the free-market going is good. Oddly, however, the continental approach has already been given a fillip from an unlikely quarter: Ian Byatt, the water regulator.

Water monopolies are tipped as a target for takeovers this year. This morning will see the debut of United Utilities, formed by merging North West Water, Welsh Water and Anglian Water. Mr Byatt wants to ensure, however, that his charges do not become minor parts of faceless conglomerates. He is pressing the Office of Fair Trading to make Welsh Water keep a separate stock market quotation for Dwr Cymru, its water utility. He has, somewhat optimistically, asked United Utilities to do the same after the event.

Mr Byatt's motives are evidently varied. He fears it might be easier for smart conglomerate financiers to pull the wool over his eyes. More fundamentally, he reckons that more managers spend far too much time on other activities, to the detriment of their water businesses. If the water utilities had to be separate quoted companies, they would have

to have independent boards and separate management that focused on its own business. This thinking strikes at the heart of the Anglo-Saxon concept of takeovers, of integrated management and cash flows, of bosses who crack the whip and allocate resources to divisional managements round their empire.

In retrospect, it might have been better for consumers if water and electricity companies had been made permanently takeover proof, avoiding the rush since their golden shares expired. Peer competition proved so good a spur that none of the utility takeovers has yet featured critiques of "poor" management. Mr Byatt cannot put the clock back and rewrite the privatisation regime. Separate-quoted companies with outstanding 25 per cent public holdings would not work in the British context. Investors rightly have owning minority stakes, so they are lowly rated. And the British are far more concerned than are relaxed continentalers with the legal and accounting niceties of inter-company dealings and control.

Continental industrial empires that rely on pyramids of control and leave minority investors in the cold are obsolete. We don't want them here. Most of the benefits now associated with takeovers might nonetheless be achieved far more cheaply and accountably by powerful shareholders, looser federations of businesses, joint companies or asset swaps. The takeover bid is the most over-used tool in business.

Eric Reguly on the secret mission of Charles Lamb Allen, the Granada TV chief

The man with Forte in his sights

For the past two years, Charles Lamb Allen has held two jobs, one official and one secret. The official one was chief executive of Granada Television; the other was heading the undercover team that was examining Forte in minute detail.

Forte, the international hotels and restaurants group pieced together by Lord Forte and now run by his son, Sir Rocco, had struck Allen as a possible acquisition target. Through Sutcliffe Catering, a Granada subsidiary, he had dealings with Forte's catering side and wasn't impressed. "It gave us the feeling it was not a well run company," Allen said.

He and Gerry Robinson, Forte's chief executive, thought they could run Forte better themselves and they may get their wish. On November 22, Granada launched a £3.2 billion hostile offer for Forte. Barring a counterbid, Granada will know by the third week of January whether it has won. Allen, who replaces Robinson as Granada's chief executive in March, is already making plans. He has prepared a list of senior Forte managers he wants to retain to help him to run the company. "There are a couple of people there that could be lead players," he said.

Running Granada and Forte, whose interests would

range from London Weekend Television and a TV rentals business to the George V hotel in Paris and Happy Eater roadside greasy spoons, sounds intimidating. But the combined group would not be nearly as big as it is today.

Lazard Brothers, Granada's financial adviser, is lining up buyers for the bits of Granada, such as the Savoy group and other "trophy" hotels, that Granada considers vanity operations. It said it would sell about £500 million of Forte assets and there is speculation that Allen and Robinson are preparing to unload much more.

The very heart of Forte, the luxury Meridien hotel chain, may top that list. Meridien, acquired by Sir Rocco last year for £250 million, has 53 hotels in 35 countries making it the group's top international brand. Granada, however, is not keen on them because the hotel management-contract business in the high end of the market has become exceedingly competitive. Meridien, in spite of its far flung portfolio, is a bit-player by international standards and may have to go.

Allen won't say how extensive the disposal programme will be. But he said he plans "to move forward quickly" in reshaping the company if Granada wins the takeover battle. He has had two years to plan his moves and is astounded that Granada's designs on



Charles Lamb Allen of Granada TV headed the undercover team that examined Forte in minute detail

Forte remained confidential for so long. Initially, a core group of three was assigned to gathering intelligence. Late last winter, it expanded to 12 people and by May the decision had been made to go ahead with the bid. Allen explained that Granada might have moved faster if it hadn't taken time out in 1994 to buy LWT for £770 million and integrate it with Granada TV.

Allen figures that several hundred people — Granada insiders, financial advisers, bankers, accountants and the like — knew about the upcoming bid by the autumn and still no word leaked out. Forte suspected that Granada might be ready to make a move but thought it might go after Pearson, the owner of the *Financial Times* and Penguin books. It was stunned that its target was a hotels company instead of a media concern.

Why did Granada wait until November? Allen claims the company wanted to announce the takeover attempt on the same day as its annual results. Launching the bid late in the year had another advantage, he said. "It would give us a few days off over Christmas so we could have a break."

Indeed, after a month of

insults, allegations and general mud-slinging, Granada and Forte declared a ceasefire. Things will be relatively quiet until today when Forte publishes his final defence document. Granada will then have one week to revise its bid. Merrill Lynch, the investment firm, said: "The contest looks evenly balanced at present. An increased offer is likely."

A Granada victory would cap a remarkable career for Allen, who turns 39 on Thursday. He is a fair bit younger than his peers and, even more remarkably, has no TV experience. Yet he runs the biggest TV business in the country and hangs around with the likes of Cilla Black, Michael Barrymore and the cast of *Coronation Street*.

The son of a hairdresser, he was born in Limerick. His father died when Allen was 14 and his mother supported the family by taking a job as a waitress in a British Steel dining room. British Steel seemed young Charles's destiny as well. Instead of going to university, he joined the company as an accountant trainee.

His salvation was the breakdown of his car. "That was a key motivation for me," he said. "I needed a new car, but

couldn't afford one, so I went to a company that offered me one." That company was Gallagher, the London cigarette maker. Three years later, in 1982, he joined Grand Metropolitan in London and landed in its international division, based in Saudi Arabia.

For more than four years, he travelled the Middle East and Far East. "At one point, I had 38 different nationalities working for me," he said. "I learned how to deal with different people and different logics. People have different logics."

It was in the Middle East that he met Gerry Robinson, who was then chief executive of Grand Metropolitan International Services. The Irishman hired Allen to run Grand Met's Compass division and they have been inseparable ever since.

The two led Compass's management buyout in 1988 and its flotation, which made them both millionaires, a year later. In 1991, Robinson brought him into Granada. Television was a whole new environment for Allen and the creative minds at Granada were terrified that an accountant boss would be disastrous. They were sure he would take

his cue from Robinson, who had pushed David Plowright, the well-liked Granada TV boss, out the door a few months earlier.

Allen, affable and energetic, proved them wrong. He did not do what most new bosses do. Instead of bringing in new managers, he kept most of the existing team in place and switched around their jobs in the belief that employees who are not performing well are poorly directed and not necessarily incompetent.

Taking a genuine interest in TV production also won him kudos. Allen likes to read scripts. He went through the pilot *Cocker* scripts and decided that the show, as disturbing and violent as it was, could be a hit.

He has been well rewarded for his successes. Allen, who is not married, has a townhouse just off Kensington High Street and a 40ft diesel cruiser *Brigadone*. He does not consider himself a workaholic.

Allen has proved remarkably adept at managing different businesses and does not expect many problems in taking on a hotels company if Granada wins Forte. "I'm not intimidated by this; I see this as a real opportunity," he said.

Uneconomical tunnel vision

Consequences. Radio 4, 7.20pm.

I do not think this four-part series will please politicians cursed with an inflated opinion of their social or economic know-how. Future topics to be given rough treatment include the poll tax and care in the community. Tonight it is the masterminds behind the Channel Tunnel who come in for some stick. What began as the dream of an enthusiasts is now a fact of life. Peter Jay suggests how, as an economic fact of life, the tunnel's accounts could now be looking healthier. He is not the only one to say tonight that the big mistake was to rely entirely on the private sector to finance the project. It was an underestimation, he says, that cried out for the public sector to be its sponsor and, ultimately, its financier.

Crimescapes. Radio 4 FM, 10.00am.

Amsterdam and Jarwille van de Wetering are the first city and resident crime writer to be linked in Leslie Forbes's series. Amsterdam would seem to be a safe haven for wrongdoers. Wetering says that everything is tolerated in the city provided nobody else is hurt. Presumably, that is why improvisation is permitted on a church's carillon. Amsterdam has another claim to distinction. Ask a dog what the nation's crime prospects are and he will bark his reply. Wetering does not believe people are good or bad. All offenders, he says, eventually "calm down". I wonder how he squares this philosophy with writing crime novels. — Peter Davalke

RADIO 1

FM Stereo. 6.00am Chris Evans 9.00 Kevin Greening 12.00 Jo Whiley. Inc. at 12.30pm Newsbeat and 1.15 The Net 2.00 Nicky Campbell 4.00 Mark Goodier. Inc. at 5.30-5.45 Newsbeat and 6.15 The Net 7.00 Evening Session with Steve Lamacq 9.00 Cling Film with Mark Karmali and Wendy Lloyd 10.00 Mark Radcliffe. Inc. from Manchester 12.00 Wendy Lloyd. Inc. at 12.15am The Net

RADIO 2

FM Stereo. 6.00am Sarah Kennedy 7.30 Wogan 9.30 Brian Matthew 11.30 Jimmy Young 2.00pm Debbie Thompson 3.30 Ed Stewart 6.00 John Dunn including Answers Please 7.00 Heyne over Britain with Ed Douglas 8.20 Shazam The Other Side 9.00 9.00 Turn Down the Lamp, an Irish miscellany of stories and songs 10.00 Explorer 2 10.30 The Jamblers 12.00am Adrian Fingleton Inc. at 1.30am Paddy for Thought 3.00 Steve Madden Inc. at 3.30am Paddy for Thought

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports 6.00 The Breakfast Programme 8.25 The Mega Zone. Inc. 9.45am DITV 10.30am Euronews 11.00am Daily News 12.00pm Midday with Mark 2.00pm Russco on Five 4.00pm John Inverdale Newsline, with news sport and travel news 5.45pm Entertainment News 7.00pm News Extra 7.35pm The Tuesday Match: Newcastle v Arsenal and 7.45pm v Chelsea in the FA Premier League 10.05pm News Talk 11.00pm Night Extra 12.05am After Hours 2.05am Up All Night

TALK RADIO

6.00am Sandy Watt 7.00 Simon Bates 10.00 Jonathan King 12.00 Tommy Boyd 2.00pm Alan Rickman 4.00 Scott Christman and Lower Turner 7.00 Sean Bolger 8.00 Mac Dee 10.00 James White 1.00-6.00am Ian Collins

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air, Rachmaninov (Blessed is the Man, Vespers); Brahms (Cello Sonata in F, Op 98); Debussy (Marche des Saisons); Bach (Toccata in G); Thomas Linley (Aria, ye Spirits of the storm); Bartok (Cello Symphony) 9.00 Morning Collection with Paul Gambaccini. Bach (Orchestral Suite No 2 in B minor); Bachmaninov (Piano Concerto No 2 in C minor) 10.00 Musical Encounters. Bach (See Lab and Poles); Debussy (Symphonie); Mozart (Poco Concerto); Schubert (Nacht und Träume); 10.30am André Previn conducts Prokofiev (Violin Concerto No 1); Kyung Wha Chung; LSO; 11.00am Schubert (An den Mond, Auf dem See); Mozart (Piano); Bach arr Brahms (Chaconne); Schumann (Symphony No 4: Chamber Orchestra of Europe) 12.00pm Composer of the Week: Elgar. Paddy Goss talks to the conductor Richard Hickox about Elgar's choral works and the influence of his Roman Catholic background. Berens, Wand of Youth Suite No 1; Oh, my warriors, Caraculus; The Dream of Gerontius, excerpts; Judas scene from The Apostles; The Sun goes down, The Khodas 1.00pm News 1.05 The BBC Christmas Special. The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Piers Stenzel performs Strauss (Kaiserwaltzer); Schubert (Symphony No 8 in B minor, Unfinished); Beethoven (Symphony No 7 in A) 2.15 French Songs by Bizet, Saint-Saëns, Duparc, Fauré and Dupont, by John Aler and Jeff Cohen 3.30pm The BBC Proms. The BBC Proms: under Van der Meer. Prokofiev performs Rimsky-Korsakov (Suite, Christmas Eve in St Petersburg); Prokofiev (Symphony, Leukenberg (K); Tchaikovsky (Capriccio Italien) 5.00pm The Music Machine: Children of Our Time. Jeremy Sumner summarizes the Synthetic Age and the effects of the music police in 2045 5.15pm Folklore Songbook. Ian Burrows talks to the composer George Gershwin about his song cycle, *Alone* 5.30pm A Land Without Music? Andrew Motion on the effects of the First World War, with music by Parry, Elgar, Gurney, German, Butterworth, Bridge, Vaughan Williams and Howells (1) 7.30pm Anniversary: Mahler Festival. Mahler's Symphony No 10; Das Lied von der Erde 8.20pm Cultural Baggage: Gurney. An exploration of the significance and contemporary of cultural phenomena (2) 9.40pm Paul Winkler. Spring Quartets in C, Op 10 No 5; in B flat, Op 10 No 3; in E flat, Op 45 10.45pm The Shellee Show. Jeremy Nicholas with music from the age of 18th-century Romanticism. Jonathan Wiles introduces a concert marking the 450th anniversary of the death of William Laves

RADIO 4

5.55am Shipping Forecast (LW only) 6.00 News 6.10am Farming Today 6.25 Prayer for the Day 6.30 Today, Inc. 7.00, 7.20, 7.40, 8.00, 8.30 News 8.55, 9.55 Weather 7.25, 8.25 Sport 7.45 Thought for the Day 8.40 Harvest of the Cold Months, by Elizabeth David (2/5) 8.55 Weather 9.00-10.00, 11.00-4.00pm Test Match: Special (LW only). South Africa v England in the first day of the Test from Cape Town 8.00 News (FM only) 9.00 Call Nick Rowe: 0171-580 4444 (FM only). Topical phone-in 10.00-10.30pm News, Crisescape (FM only). See Choice 10.00 Daily Service (LW only) 10.15pm The BBC's Radio 4 (LW only). The Fighter by Nicole Jempray. Read by James Nesbitt 11.00 The following are on FM only until 4pm 10.30 Women's Hour. Jenni Murray meets Betty Parsons, whose techniques for managing pregnancy and labour have transformed childbirth. Serial: Lions and Liquor 11.30 Medicine Now, with Geoff Watts 12.00 News: You and Yours 12.25pm The Heritage Quiz, with Sue MacGregor, Christopher Cook, Hunter Davies, Philipa Gregory and Martin Watwright 12.55 Weather 1.00 The Archers (FM, LW) 1.40 The Archers 1.55 Shipping Forecast 2.00 News: The Priesthood. Alun Owen's last play is set in Speke Hall, Liverpool, and was commissioned to celebrate the centenary of the National Trust 2.30 Personal Records. Jeremy Nicholas explores the record collection of Robert Hardy 3.00 News: The Litteration Shift, with Dave Brehn 4.00 News 4.05 Kaleidoscope. Paul Vaughan on the relationship between culture and evolution 4.45 Family Feelings: The Use of irony, written and read by Deborah Moggach (2/5) 5.00pm 5.50 Shipping Forecast 5.55 Weather 6.00 Six O'Clock News 6.30 Cook's Tour. Ian Hargreave explores the life and laughs of the comedian Peter Cook 7.00 News 7.05 The Archers 7.25 Consequences. See Choice 8.00 Science Now (1) 8.30 Reading Around. All Parrot's Speech, by Paul Bowles (1) 9.00 In Touch. Peter White updates the stories that have affected visually impaired people in 1995, and reports on successful campaigns (1) 9.30 Kaleidoscope (1) 9.55 Weather 10.00 The World Tonight, with Owen Bennett Jones 10.45 Book at Bedtime: The Harpelle Report, by J.L. Carr. Alistair McGowan reads the second of ten parts 11.00 Meditations. The events that have dominated the media in 1995 (1) 11.30 Derek Cooper's Necessary Pleasures (1) 12.00 News. Inc. 12.27am Weather 12.30 The Late Book: Miss Smith's Feeling for Snow, by Peter Hogg (12/15) 12.45 Shipping Forecast 1.00am World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 80.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.8. LW 158; MW 188 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1059. Television. Rosemary Smith and Susan Thomson

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THISTLE HOTELS

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

The taxman cometh

I do not want to spoil anybody's new year, but tax expert Geoff Edwards of Grant Thornton tells me that the Inland Revenue is scheduled to investigate 38,500 income taxpayers and at least 4,200 companies before this tax year is out.

It will also be "looking at" 3 per cent of all self employed, 42 per cent of all larger companies and 15 per cent of all other companies in its hunt for undeclared income. Last year, its investigations netted a cool £6.1 billion.

Edwards adds that with the introduction of self assessment next tax year, the scope for investigations will widen.

Margin winner

SCHRODER VENTURES has picked Martin Sorrell of WPP Group as the winner of a case of Champagne for his reply to their pre-Christmas questionnaire sent to chiefs of

Action man

BRENDAN "Have a Go Joe" Russell today becomes the youngest person ever to join the board of merchant bank Singer & Friedlander. Russell

The taxman cometh

joined the bank's corporate finance department in 1989, and although only 33, he has already had an action-packed life. He has spent nearly five years in the Territorial Army and has a passion for diving. Last year he made more than 50 dives in some of the greatest diving locations, although perhaps his greatest plunge — from where his nickname springs — was at Waterloo station. There, in the middle of the concourse, Russell decided to "have a go", costing to the aid of a T.R. Rack manager in pursuit of a fleeing and arm-flailing thief. His action was praised by the judge at the subsequent trial, who ordered that Russell be given a £100 reward.

COLIN CAMPBELL

Oh my fur and whiskers, I smell red herring

Dramatically, at least, 1996 will go down as the year that began not with a bang but with a miaow. "The cat said she had to die," spat the curiously named Spinnys towards the end of last night's *The Ruth Rendell Mystery: Heartstones* (TV). Oh yes? Bit slow with the tupper, so why not just push her off the cathedral scaffolding? I think not.

Actually, the fact that one teenage daughter was talking to psychopathic cats came as quite a relief. Until then, I had been under the impression that her sister, Elvira, was turning into one. "You're growing fur!" shrieked the housekeeper, who had just seen a plate of sandwiches tossed away by a strangely hairy forearm. "You need help." She needed help? What about us? We had been watching this for an hour-and-a-half and it was getting sillier by the minute. And yet it had all started so

promisingly. The cathedral close was in mourning, the Crossland family more or less united in grief following the death of wife and mother, Anne. The cat, as I understand it, was not implicated "always very punctual with my meals" was Anne. Canon Crossland's wife had succumbed to cancer, although there was the definite suggestion that her demise might have been accelerated by her husband and family doctor acting in cahoots.

Certainly that was what the melodramatically-inclined Elvira believed. "What are you saying, Elvira?" asked her younger and more impressionable sister. "I'm saying... that Luke and Dr Trewynne poisoned her." With dialogue like that, I'm not surprised Spinnys turned to the cat for company.

As I understand it, that and much of the subsequent plot turned out to be teenage delusion, the exploration of which is an

interesting idea, but not necessarily on a Bank Holiday Monday night. The principal dramatic device employed was to make us believe that it was Elvira who was responsible for the second death, that of Mary the medievalist, who had supplanted her mother — and indeed her — in her father's affections.

Elvira made a convincing red herring. There was her name for starters, when did you last come across an Elvira who was a goody? (Mind you, if we had known that Spinnys was short for Despinus...) What else? She was anorexic (hence, apparently, the fur), nursed suicidal tendencies and, when not playing sadly on the piano, enjoyed translating Virgil. She also harboured a precocious knowledge of things pharmacological. How many teenagers of your acquaintance can hold forth authoritatively about the dosing lev-

REVIEW



Matthew Bond

els of dimorphism? What — most of them? I see.

Despite the essential silliness of an over-killingly plot, Piers Haggard, the director, secured two splendid performances from his juvenile stars, Emily Mortimer as Elvira and from his own real-life daughter, Daisy Haggard, as Spinnys. Anthony Andrews played their father, Luke, apparently borrowing both performance and

haircut from James Fox's Dean in *The Choir*. Why is it, I wonder, that the Church of England is suddenly getting all the romantic leading men?

Earlier, the BBC had given the clearest indication yet that, after the success of *Pride and Prejudice* and *The Buccaneers*, it is going to be bosomed with everything in 1996. Still, *Red Riding Hood* and *Red Riding Hood* (BBC).

From the flames and playing cards of the opening titles to the time slot presumably ruled out the dancing naked lady — underlined is one thing, undid quite another, it was clear that we were in for another of the author's tales in the unexpected. So it proved, with Dahl providing all manner of twists and turns until the moment when Little Red Riding Hood (Julie Walters, who also played Grandma) was facing certain

death at the paws of Wolfe... when "with a smile, one eyelid flickers, she whips a pistol from her knicker."

The woodland sets were beautifully created, as was the furry cast using the animatronic gadgetry that seems to be all the rage — you know, eyes that move, ears that waggle. Franz Welser-Möst steered the London Philharmonic through Paul Patterson's wonderful score and was rewarded with the drive-on part of Little Red Riding Hood's chauffeur. My only criticism was that the piece seemed stretched at 45 minutes and that the ponderous early scenes will have confused as many adults as it will children.

For reasons best known to itself, BBC2 decided that the new year should be marked with music, a decision that met with varying degrees of success. *Burt Bacharach... This is Now* was a melodic delight and a highly

enjoyable reminder of the great songs that, largely working in tandem with Hal David, Bacharach turned out in the 1960s. With his music now back in vogue, there was no shortage of stars queuing up to pay homage, including Noel Gallagher of Oasis who seems to have appeared on every musical tribute programme I have seen in the last three months. Still, at least we discovered where he got his hair cut from. He was a deejay ringer for Cilla Black circa 1963, struggling to find what it was all about with this Alfie. "Alfie? You call your dog Alfie."

By contrast, the best thing about *Area: The Burger and The King* was its title. Elvis Presley ate a huge amount of junk food and died a very fat man — end of story as far as I am concerned, and no amount of fancy editing and funny rereps was going to change my mind. Fried peanut butter and banana sandwiches? Yuck.

BBC1

- 8.00am Business Breakfast (70482)
- 7.00 BBC Breakfast News (92405568)
- 9.05 Global Gatecrash: India (s) (4757918)
- 9.30 State of the Nation (s) (45145)
- 10.00 News (Ceefax) (7449863)
- 10.05 Can't Cook, Won't Cook (s) (6543024)
- 10.30 Good Morning With Anne and Nick (s) (6579)
- 12.00 News (Ceefax) regional news and weather (678905)
- 12.05pm Pebble Mill: Guests are Lillie Dean and Morgan Freeman. (s) (661011)
- 12.50 Regional News (13622966) 1.00 One O'Clock News (68802)
- 1.30 Neighbours (Ceefax) (s) (64784182)
- 1.50 Barnack: Project Phoenix. With George Peppard and Stefanie Powers (2078937)
- 3.05 Timekeepers Quiz (s) (5144821)
- 3.30 Arts in Your Pants (s) (1448192) 3.50 ChuckleVision (s) (1468956) 4.10 Free Willy (Ceefax) (s) (6483790) 4.35 Take Two (Ceefax) (s) (648821)
- 5.00 Newsround (Ceefax) (4873043)



Terence Hardiman, lessons in tyranny (5.10pm)

- 5.10 **NEW** The Demon Headmaster (Ceefax) (s) (7024734)
- 5.30 Neighbours (s) (Ceefax) (s) (361208)
- 6.00 Six O'Clock News (Ceefax) and weather (79)
- 6.30 Regional News magazines (31)
- 7.00 Holiday. Jill Dando checks out a package holiday to Kerala, southern India. Richard Wilson enjoys what Mexico has to offer, and Paul Gogarty reports from Halkidiki in Greece. Plus Money Don in a lighthouse in Llandudno (Ceefax) (s) (3821)
- 7.30 EastEnders (Ceefax) (s) (43)
- 8.00 Great Ormond Street. Stories of the young patients of Great Ormond Street Hospital. Three-year-old Joshua Whymark is the only person in Britain diagnosed with PNP, a very rare immune deficiency, and his only chance is a bone marrow transplant (Ceefax) (s) (6869)
- 8.30 **NEW** News at 8.30. Sit-com about grandmothers reluctantly playing parents again. With Penelope Keith and William Gault (Ceefax) (s) (8376)
- 9.00 Nine O'Clock News (Ceefax) regional news and weather (2314)
- 9.30 The Peacock Spring. Concluding the drama from Turner Godden's novel, set in India in 1959. With Peter Egan and Jennifer Hall. (Ceefax) (s) (87896)
- 11.00 **FILM: The Mean Season** (1985) starring Kurt Russell and Mariel Hemingway. Thriller based on Leon Friedman's novel which explores the themes of news creation and manipulation. A Miami journalist strikes up an uneasy partnership with a serial killer who calls him after each murder he commits. As the journalist's involvement with the overall story increases, so does the danger to him and his girlfriend. Directed by Philip Baranoff (Ceefax) (350043)
- 12.30am Weather (6715154)

BBC2

- 7.00am Breakfast News (Signed) (6733111)
- 7.15 Lassie (s) (3664289) 7.40 Albert the 5th Musketeer (s) (Ceefax) (7911444) 8.05 Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles (s) (Ceefax) (2389549)
- 8.35 **FILM: The Sheepman** (1958) starring Glenn Ford, Shirley Maclaine and Leslie Nielsen. Tongue-in-cheek western in which a sheep rancher runs into trouble when he is kidnapped by a local big shot. Directed by George Marshall (6545386)
- 10.00 Playdays (s) (6642395)
- 10.25 **FILM: Johnny Angel** (1985, b/w) starring George Raft, John Huston and Henry Cavill. A psychological thriller set in New Orleans. Directed by Edwin L. Mann (622734)
- 11.50 The Fugitive (b/w). (Ceefax) (608208)
- 12.30pm Working Lunch (45163) 1.00 Spot (s) (7570288) 1.05 Junior Jungle (s) (s) (2653728) 1.20 On The Throne (s) (1767665)
- 2.00 1996 World Professional Darts Championship from the Lakeside Country Club. Includes at 3.00 and 3.55 News and weather (576688)
- 6.00 Fresh Prince of Bel Air. Teen comedy (s) (35227)
- 6.25 Newswatch High. Drama series about the staff and students of an Australian inner-city high school. (Ceefax) (s) (23818)
- 7.10 The Ren and Stimpy Show. A double episode of the cult cartoon series. (Ceefax) (s) (918753)
- 7.30 **NEW** Local Heroes. (Ceefax) (s) (65)



Melody Clark, Liz Barclay, Tony Morris (8.00pm)

- 8.00 **NEW** Pound for Pound (1981)
- 8.30 Food and Drink. Sustenance magazine. (Ceefax) (s) (6918)
- 9.00 **FILM: Victim of Innocence** (1990) starring Cheryl Ladd, Anthony John Danon and Melissa Chan. A drama about the pressures on a Vietnam veteran and his wife when he brings his Vietnamese daughter to America. Directed by Mel Dornick (1985)
- 10.30 Newsnight (Ceefax) (435937)
- 11.15 1996 World Professional Darts Championship Highlights (s) (541531)
- 12.15am Weather (5306319)
- 12.20 **FILM: Milou in May** (1989) starring Michel Piccoli, Mimi-Mimi, Michel Duchaussoy and Harriet Walter. French comedy set in 1968 about a 60-year-old man living a peaceful life in the country with his mother. But her death causes him much pain. It also marks the arrival of his precious family. Directed by Louis Malle (860241). Ends at 2.05

The number next to each TV programme title is the Video PlusCode. Numbers which allow you to programme your video recorder to view a programme. Can be used with most video recorders. The number next to each radio programme title is the Radio PlusCode. Can be used with most radio receivers. The number next to each video programme title is the Video PlusCode. Can be used with most video recorders. The number next to each radio programme title is the Radio PlusCode. Can be used with most radio receivers.

CHOICE



Adam Hart-Davis on the pioneer trail (BBC2, 7.30pm)

- Local Heroes** BBC2, 7.30pm
A lively little series on pioneers of science and invention owes much to the enormous personality of its presenter, Adam Hart-Davis. With his grey hair and spectacles he looks like a boffin, if a slightly dotty one. While his gaudy pink and yellow cycling gear ensures he will never be lost in a crowd. He first greets us from Clifton Suspension Bridge and looks us by not talking about Bristol. Instead he enthuses over the bridge. Ideas of one Sarah Guppy, including an all-purpose breakfast cooker that makes tea and toast and boils an egg. Funny that it never caught on. More seriously, Hart-Davis salutes Edward Jenner, the Gloucestershire doctor who invented vaccination. For those who do not know the story, it is a surprising one.

- Pound for Pound** BBC2, 8.00pm
Providing much the same service as Radio 4's *Money Box*, though in a more popular and flamboyant style. *Pound for Pound* is a new series on personal finance. Some may find that the style gets in the way of the substance and some of the items are more for entertainment than instruction. An example is giving £100 each to a stockbroker and to a trio of sixth formers and challenging them to double it in five weeks. Against that, there is a solid investigation into the extended warranties that stores are so keen to offer us on electrical goods. The advice is to be wary. And as the first tax-free Tessa matures, the programme asks whether the child born five years ago of John Major's only budget should be loved or abandoned.

- The Demon Headmaster** BBC1, 5.10pm
A twice-weekly drama for children is set in a school which for their parents may have creepy echoes of a totalitarian state. It is played by Terence Hardiman, the power-mad head uses his powers of hypnotism to command absolute obedience. Not for nothing is the school motto: "Forge a single will out of the will of many." But this junior version of 1984, adapted by one children's author, Helen Crosswell, from the novel of another, Gillian Cross, is more entertaining and less oppressive than it sounds. The focus is on the resistance to the tyrant, led by a small and heroic band of pupils including two brothers and their newly adopted sister. The trio's kindly Mum is played by Tessa Peake-Jones of *Only Fools and Horses*.

- Outside Edge** ITV, 6.30pm
After an above-average Christmas special in Corfu, Richard Harris's sitcom is back home pitching stumps for a new series. The setting may be a cricket club but newcomers who have the game can be assured that what goes on off the field is as important as what happens on it. What Harris gives us, essentially, is another variation on the behaving badly. Male chauvinism, ill rules, and particularly on Saturday afternoons. The awful Roger and his mousy wife, brilliantly played by Robert Daws and Brenda Blethyn, are comedy creations of the first rank and the support is formidable. A real cricketer, Godfrey Evans, turns up tonight to open the new pavilion. You can be sure there is going to be a hiccup. Peter Waymark

CARLTON

- 6.00am GMTV (2200208)
- 9.25 Win, Lose Or Draw (s) (4748902)
- 9.55 London Today (Teletext) (662444)
- 10.00 The Time... The Place (s) (1433640)
- 10.35 This Morning (57634550) 12.20pm Regional News and weather (6783289)
- 12.30 ITN News and weather (Teletext) (6082111)
- 12.55 Home and Away (Teletext) (6067808)
- 1.25 **NEW** Chain Letters. Game show with Vince Henderson (Teletext) (3242647)
- 1.55 A Country Practice (s) (64789647) 2.20 Vanessa (Teletext) (s) (18492395) 2.50 Capital Women (s) (422821) 3.20 News (Teletext) (2671395) 3.25 London Today (Teletext) (2670686)
- 3.30 The Magic House Learning through fun (s) (2494753) 3.40 Tots TV: Lost Button (s) (7083376) 3.50 Twinkl: The Dreaming (7074200) 4.00 Budge the Little Helicopter (s) (2245477) 4.15 Santo Buglio. Exceptional cartoon series (9519688) 4.40 Warner Brothers Cartoon (6570889) 4.45 Bad Influence (s) (9499173)
- 5.10 After 5 With Caron Keating (Teletext) (6559378)
- 6.40 ITN News and weather (154005)
- 6.55 Your Show. Viewers air their views (525050)
- 6.00 Home and Away (s) (Teletext) (47)
- 6.30 London Tonight. (Teletext) (27)
- 7.00 Emmerdale (Teletext) (6889)
- 8.00 The Bill: Call Waiting. A series of hoax telephone calls takes its toll on the stability of a family (Teletext) (s) (4937)

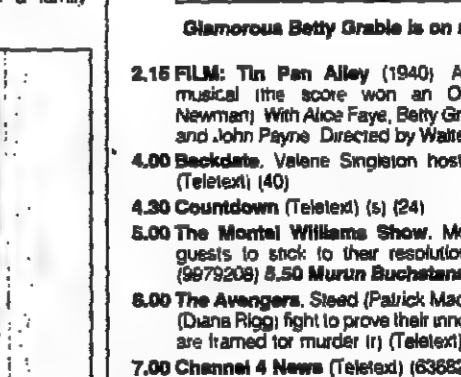


Godfrey Evans and Brenda Blethyn (8.30pm)

- 8.30 **CHOICE** Outside Edge. (Teletext) (s) (3444)
- 9.00 **FILM: Lethal Weapon** (1987) starring Mel Gibson and Danny Glover. An undercover policeman, disturbed by the death of his wife, teams up with a stable family man partner to bust up a drugs ring run by a murderous gang of CIA-trained killers. Directed by Richard Donner (Teletext) Continues after the news (5753)
- 10.00 ITN News at Ten and weather (Teletext) (71937) 10.30 London Tonight (17759)
- 10.40 **FILM: Lethal Weapon** continued (Teletext) (504194)
- 11.45 **FILM: The Last Dragon** (1985) A martial arts adventure starring Taimak, directed by Michael Schultz (983802)
- 11.55am **Endeavour** League Extra (9952023)
- 2.30 **FILM: A Jolly Bad Fellow** (1984) Satirical drama about a brilliant but unhinged professor who develops a toxin that sends his victims into fits of laughter and then kills them without trace. Starring Lou McKinn, Janet Munro, Maxine Audley and Duncan Macrae. Directed by Don Chaffey (83777)
- 4.00 Cowboys in Skirts... The Making of Rob Roy (s) (26154) 4.30 Dead Men's Tales: To the Last Gasp. Reenactments of disasters and marvellous escapes (85369405)
- 4.55 The Time... The Place (s) (1052319)
- 5.30 ITN Morning News (54796). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

- 6.35 amThink Tank (s) (5373173)
- 7.00 The Big Breakfast (81753)
- 9.00 Saved by the Bell: The New Cees (s) (4774685)
- 9.25 Babylon 5 (Teletext) (s) (1237662)
- 10.20 California Dreams (s) (1037918)
- 10.45 Biker Mice from Mars (7360005)
- 11.10 Mork and Mindy (s) (s) (8860289)
- 11.40 Dog City (s) (5815956)
- 12.00 **NEW** Creepers. Creepers (s) (2632918) 12.20pm Terrycorp. (s) (26331) 12.30 Sesame Street (50376) 1.30 Ovide (7575598)
- 1.55 News. A young classical musician strikes up an unlikely friendship (6479637)



Glamorous Betty Grable is on song (2.15pm)

- 2.15 **FILM: Tin Pan Alley** (1940) A richly melodic musical the score won an Oscar for Alfred Newman. With Alice Faye, Betty Grable, Jack Oakie and John Payne. Directed by Walter Lang (7360005)
- 4.00 Backstage. Valerie Singleton hosts the new quiz (Teletext) (40)
- 4.30 Countdown (Teletext) (s) (24)
- 5.00 The Montel Williams Show. Montel challenges guests to stick to their resolutions (Teletext) (s) (6879208) 5.50 Murrin Buchanan (709963)
- 6.00 The Avengers. Steed (Patrick Macnee) and Emma (Diana Rigg) fight to prove their innocence after they are framed for murder (s) (Teletext) (95440)
- 7.00 Channel 4 News (Teletext) (636521)
- 7.55 The Slot (953444)
- 8.00 Wild Britain. The bramble, sometimes known as the mulberry bush in East Angles, provides food and shelter for a variety of wildlife including snails, slugs, caterpillars, small mammals, birds and bees. With Roll Harris (s) (Teletext) (s) (2579)
- 8.30 Brookside. Bev throws a party for Ron, Jacqui has an unexpected visitor and Gary plans a trip (Teletext) (s) (4314)
- 9.00 ER. American hospital drama series (s) (Teletext) (s) (3655192)
- 10.40 Sex in a Cold Climate. Women meet for an Ann Summers party and the chance to buy goods ranging from lingerie to sex aids (s) (s) (426289)
- 11.25 Nurses. American black comedy. (Teletext) (485192)
- 12.00 Naked Sport: The Big Pitch. A look at the \$25 billion business of American football (s) (Teletext) (s) (48848)
- 1.00am The World of Hammer Frankenstein films (s) (Teletext) (s) (91425)
- 1.30 Say Hello to the Real Dr Snide. Dr Snide is Archie's cat and when things go wrong, Archie (Ralph Brown) can blame the cat. There is a problem, however — Dr Snide doesn't exist. First shown in the 4-Play season of short dramas (s) (707574)
- 2.35 **FILM: West of the Divide** (1934, b/w) Classic, early John Wayne western. Our hero joins a band of outlaws to track the man who killed his parents and kidnapped his infant brother. Directed by Robert N. Brubaker (7962048). Ends at 3.35

VARIATIONS

- ANGLIA**
As London except 9.55-10.00 Anglia News and Weather (893444) 12.20pm-12.30 Anglia News and Weather (878236) 12.55-1.00 Anglia News and Weather (878236) 1.25-1.35 Home and Away (2426647) 2.30-2.40 Children (1026221) 3.25-3.30 Anglia News (878236) 3.35-3.40 Anglia News (1026221) 3.45-3.50 Anglia News (1026221) 3.55-4.00 Anglia News (1026221) 4.05-4.10 Anglia News (1026221) 4.15-4.20 Anglia News (1026221) 4.25-4.30 Anglia News (1026221) 4.35-4.40 Anglia News (1026221) 4.45-4.50 Anglia News (1026221) 4.55-5.00 Anglia News (1026221) 5.05-5.10 Anglia News (1026221) 5.15-5.20 Anglia News (1026221) 5.25-5.30 Anglia News (1026221) 5.35-5.40 Anglia News (1026221) 5.45-5.50 Anglia News (1026221) 5.55-6.00 Anglia News (1026221) 6.05-6.10 Anglia News (1026221) 6.15-6.20 Anglia News (1026221) 6.25-6.30 Anglia News (1026221) 6.35-6.40 Anglia News (1026221) 6.45-6.50 Anglia News (1026221) 6.55-7.00 Anglia News (1026221) 7.05-7.10 Anglia News (1026221) 7.15-7.20 Anglia News (1026221) 7.25-7.30 Anglia 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Boxing promoter faces disqualification proceedings after four-year inquiry

DTI to seek boardroom ban on Warren



Warren: he will contest the action

THE Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) is poised to start disqualification proceedings against Frank Warren, the promoter behind some of the biggest names in professional boxing. The attempt to ban Mr Warren, 43, from serving as a company director, follows similar action against Terry Venables, the England football team coach. Proceedings are due to begin next month.

The move by the DTI follows a four-year investigation, and is linked to the London Arena, the ill-fated Docklands sporting and entertainment venue that collapsed in 1991 with debts of more than £20 million. Mr Warren had a 70 per cent stake in the London Arena, and suffered substantial losses when the receivers went in. The venue reopened in 1994.

Mr Warren faces a ban of between two and 15 years if the DTI action succeeds. A similar threat faces Mr Venables, who was informed by the DTI last month that it intended to start disqualification proceedings against him. Mr Venables denied any wrongdoing, and said he would fight the action.

The London Arena, on the Isle of Dogs in east London, opened in 1989 with a concert by Duran Duran, and went on to host other big names, including Pavarotti. But the venue never lived up to expectations, and collapsed under the weight of its debts. Creditors included Landhurst Leasing, the controversial loan company that collapsed in 1992 with debts of £121 million. Landhurst exploited its links with Damon Hill, Johnny Herbert, and other names in British sport, to persuade banks to advance millions in loans.

Government inspectors discovered that six companies connected to Mr Warren received £2 million from Landhurst, including £180,000 to finance a Frank Sinatra concert at the London Arena. The arena also received more than £830,000 in loans from Landhurst.

In August 1993, Melvyn Hague, a director of Arena Developments (Europe), was banned for three years under the Company Directors Disqualification Act. Similar proceedings were reported to be under way against Mr Warren, who was a director of Arena Developments (Europe) and other associated companies. Mr Warren said he had at all times protected the interests of creditors, employees and shareholders.

The DTI investigation extended beyond the London Arena to encompass Mr Warren's wider business dealings. Mr

Warren was chairman of Rex Williams Leisure, a snack-and-video company that went into administration in 1990 owing £2.6 million. Investigators unravelled a string of disastrous deals that resulted in massive losses and write-downs.

Mr Warren was unavailable for comment yesterday, but has previously said that he would "strenuously contest" any action by the DTI. The DTI does not comment on individual cases.

In November 1989, Mr Warren was shot by an unidentified gunman outside a theatre in Barking, east London. Terry Marsh, the former boxing champion once managed by Mr Warren, was charged with attempted murder but acquitted. A long stint in hospital made it difficult for Mr Warren to devote much time to his business.

His was a classic rags-to-riches tale. Mr

Warren left school at 15 and worked as a porter in Smithfield Meat Market. He branched into business, renting vending machines to pubs, then fell into boxing after a friend encouraged him to bet on a fight. By the 1980s he was a millionaire.

Today, Mr Warren has 20 boxers on his books, and enjoys a profitable association with Don King, the extrovert American promoter. The pair hope to bring Frank Bruno and Mike Tyson together for a title clash in the spring.

Almost 5,000 directors have been disqualified since the Company Directors Disqualification Act came into effect in 1986. Peter Clowes, former head of Barlow Clowes, is one of only 24 people to have been barred for the maximum 15 years. Robert Miller, former head of Dunsdale Securities, received a ten-year ban in 1991.

black
white
in
colour

Labour may merge watchdogs

By CHRISTINE BUCKLEY

LABOUR has launched a sweeping review that could lead to the offices of water, electricity and gas regulation being scrapped and replaced by one regulator, if the party forms the next Government.

The review, which will form a crucial part of Labour's energy policy, will begin in earnest when a group of industry specialists recruited by the shadow Trade and Industry team starts to draft a fresh regulatory framework.

John Battle, the energy spokesman, said: "It could be that we have just one regulator, but with proper back-up. It's generally agreed that regulation at the moment is fragmentary." Labour has been a stern critic of the regulation of the utilities. Mr Battle said: "This will be a solid review that will stand the test of time. We need a structure robust enough to tackle the free market currents sweeping through energy."

He refused to say which of the regulators, if any, would survive if Labour implements a single regulatory structure for energy. Power reform, page 33

New Look is sold to institutions for £170m

By MARTIN BARROW

NEW LOOK, one of the UK's largest womenswear retailing chains, has been sold for up to £170 million, it was announced yesterday.

The sale of the privately owned business to institutional investors has taken place a year after the founding Singh family aborted plans for a flotation on the stock market.

The deal, signed over the weekend, realises a multi-million fortune — worth five times this week's National Lottery rollover jackpot — for a family that began the business with a single shop in the West Country in 1969.

Tom Singh and his family will receive an initial payment of £155 million in cash and shares. They will receive a further sum of up to £15 million, over the next three years, based on the performance of the company.

After completion, they will hold a 25 per cent interest in Valsar, a new company set up for the transaction by BZW Private Equity, which led the

institutional purchase, and Prudential Venture Managers, the joint underwriters.

Mr Singh, 44, and John Harris and Gavin Aldred, his fellow executive directors of New Look, will continue to run the company. Louis Sherwood, its non-executive chairman, takes the same role with Valsar. A stock market flotation is unlikely to be considered for at least three years.

The purchase price is broadly in line with the expected valuation of the company before a flotation was aborted in November 1994.

Mr Singh opened the first New Look outlet with a £5,000 loan from his parents. The company now trades from 305 shops in the UK and 18 in France. A further 12 shops are expected to open by the end of March. New Look expects to earn profits of about £20 million in the next financial year, on sales of £200 million.

Graeme White, director of BZW Private Equity, said: "This is a very successful business and there is significant growth to go in the UK and in France. The management have developed a formula which works well with the consumer and our plan for the future is to expand the format in both countries."

The deal is a setback for the new issues market, which had hoped for a good start to 1996 after a lacklustre 1995.

New Look, which blamed adverse stock market conditions for the pulling of its flotation, said that it had given fresh consideration to a public share listing, but had decided that a sale to institutions represented a better way forward. Offers from at least two trade buyers were declined.

One remarkable aspect of the New Look story is that growth has been achieved with the recession in retailing at its worst. The company began the 1990s with about 70 shops and has more than doubled operating margins in spite of generally selling goods at a 10 per cent discount to rivals such as Dorothy Perkins and Eterni.

Mr Singh, an intensely private man, developed the first dozen or so outlets almost single-handed, collecting stock from London by van and delivering it to each shop.



Arm combat: Granada's Gerry Robinson, left, and Sir Rocco Forte wrestling for the initiative in their £3.2bn takeover battle

Forte plans put pressure on Granada to raise bid

By ERIC REGULY

GRANADA will come under additional pressure today to raise its bid for Forte with the publication of the hotel and catering group's final defence document.

But Granada is playing down speculation that it will boost its £3.2 billion hostile offer by 10 per cent or more.

The document is expected to reveal plans for an investor loyalty package that includes a share buyback of about £500 million and an increase in the regular dividend, which has been at 7.5p since 1993, when it was cut from 9.9p. It will also assert that the group, short of its restaurants division, will report accelerated earnings growth over the next few years as the hotels sector recovers.

The City is not convinced that Granada will win Forte easily. Granada, baring a counterbid, has until next Tuesday to increase its offer.

In advance of the final defence document, Forte called again for Granada to back its claim that it could squeeze an extra £100 million in annual earnings from Forte. Granada plans to break down the figure, but will not do so until early next week because it wants to give Forte as little time as possible to challenge the scenario.

Graham Searjeant, page 34
Man with a mission, page 34

London young face bleak jobs outlook, says report

By PHILIP BASSETT, INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

MASS youth unemployment in London, leading to deepening economic and social deprivation, is now a "real danger", an economic assessment of the capital's prospects suggests.

The study says that by the end of the decade, there will be 230,000 fewer jobs in London than in 1990 — and that young people will bear the brunt of this collapse in employment because the jobs they traditionally hold are being taken by part-timers or married women returning to work, or disappearing as a result of industrial or technological change.

The study is by one of the Government's Training and Enterprise Councils, which administer training. It notes that the increase in unemployment among 16 and 17-year-olds will not show in the Government's

jobless figures because this age group is unable to claim unemployment benefit.

Solotex, the Tesc covering south London, says in its annual economic assessment that "despite improvements in school staying-on rates, mass youth unemployment in London is now a real danger". This will lead to "further concentrations of deprivation and deepening economic and social polarisation".

London and the South East, it says, experienced a deeper downturn than other regions in the recession of the early 1990s. Although growth in London has accelerated, it is expected to slow again by the end of the decade while industrial restructuring in the capital means that the "continuous haemorrhage" of manufactur-

ing employment has not been fully compensated for by a growth in service sector jobs.

Growth in employment is expected to be in sectors such as advertising, marketing and computing, with new jobs largely in administration, technical and professional occupations — not traditionally held by school-leavers. Manual and unskilled jobs are set to continue to decline.

John Howell, Solotex chief executive, is calling for "urgent action" to counter the vulnerability to unemployment of 16 and 17-year-olds. "This report highlights the need for substantial investment in training and work experience for young people — particularly in the 16 to 18 age group — to aid the transition into the world of work."

Smart card slow to catch on

By PHILIP FANGALOS

BRITAIN'S first attempt at a cashless society has been slow to catch on. But the founders of Mondex, an electronic cash system devised by National Westminster Bank, with Midland Bank and British Telecom, still hope that electronic money will find public favour in its UK trial and go national next year.

A pilot scheme for the Mondex electronic money system, which centres on a smart card with a microchip for storing electronic cash, was launched in Swindon last July. However, the public in Wiltshire, who were selected to take part in a one-year trial for Mondex, have been slow to use the card widely.

The card's chip is loaded with money through special cash dispensers or by using telephone lines to access a bank

account. The money can be transferred between cards by using a special wallet that resembles a pocket calculator. The cards are ideal for services using pay machines, such as car parks, pay phones and even buses, though Mondex sees a big market in pay-as-you-watch television and other developing technologies. Most of the big stores in Swindon have the compact Mondex machines beside all their cash tills.

Mondex had hoped to get 40,000 of Swindon's 190,000 residents to take a card, but to date it has recruited only 9,000. It may be possible to live a normal lifestyle, cashless, in Swindon, but few have opted to do so.

Roy Pratt, chief manager of Mondex UK, remains optimistic that Mondex will

catch on, especially now that the infrastructure is in place. He said: "The introduction of electronic cash is as much as anything, an exercise in change management and understanding people's behaviour. Not everyone adopts a new technology at the same pace."

For the moment, the Swindon trial is free to both consumers and retailers. However, from this spring, cardholders will have to pay for the service. Even a £150 monthly fee could put potential users off the smart card.

The banks and building societies would like Mondex to succeed as it costs them billions of pounds a year to handle cash. Another pilot scheme is under way in San Francisco, while trials will start in Canada and Hong Kong this summer.



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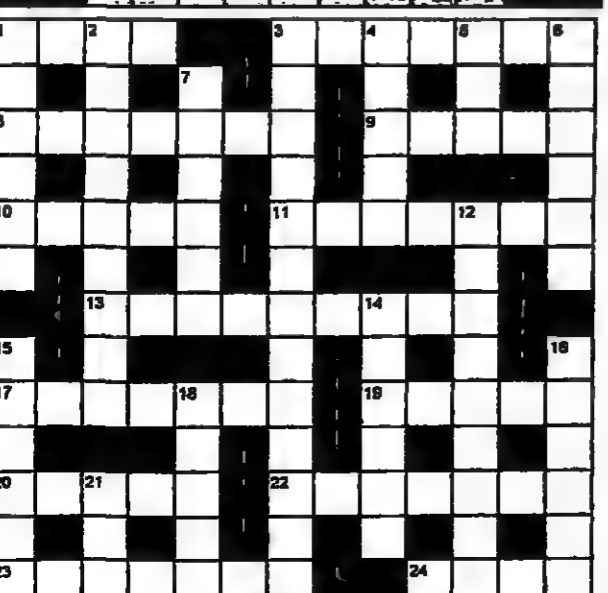
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No 667

- ACROSS
1 The two together (4)
3 Moved king to safety (7)
8 Small saucepan (7)
9 Allow (in) (5)
10 Circus comedian (5)
11 Disputes, questions (lit.) (7)
13 Practical skill; knock (9)
17 Coarse grass for paper (7)
19 (Criminal) jargon (5)
20 Disinter (3,2)
22 Wrong, wicked (7)
23 Punishment for sin (7)
24 Beginner (4)
- DOWN
1 Find midway point (6)

SOLUTION TO No 666
ACROSS: 6 Burglar alarm 7 Unix 8 Berate 9 Noah 10 Ruckus
12 Restless 16 Fish 18 Hawser 20 Throwing 21 Play the field
DOWN: 1 Brass hat 2 Elair 3 Arabic 4 Star 5 Trison 6 Banjo
11 Informer 13 Enable 14 Wordy 15 Let off 17 Syrod 19 Syz

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■ VISUAL ART 1

A new exhibition at the Tate looks at how black people have been ignored by artists for centuries



■ VISUAL ART 2

A London showing for the blurred and fragmented visions of the late artist Aubrey Williams

THE TIMES
ARTS

■ POP

After months of doubt, the Manic Street Preachers finally burst back into life with a Wembley gig



■ TOMORROW

From West End musicals to Hollywood films, Times critics pick the hottest tickets in town

Richard Cork on a Tate exhibition of art's treatment of black people; plus other London shows

Old black and white truths in colour

Learning in her most resplendent regal attire, Queen Victoria offers a stoutly bound Bible to an African king. Although his status is trumpeted by the feathers, jewels and fur he wears, the unknown monarch bows before his Empress. Outshone by the whiteness of the Queen, and outnumbered by the presence of Prince Albert, Lord Palmerston and John Russell, he is at once awed and grateful. For Victoria is honouring her imperial duty to civilise the colonies, and this solemn presentation at Windsor is clearly meant to confirm her magnanimity.

After Thomas Jones Barker painted this supremely smug scene around 1861, the picture also became known as *The Secret of England's Greatness*. But the truth is that the black people who lived in Britain had been either marginalised or ignored by its artists for a long time. Four centuries of painting were available to the organisers of the Tate Gallery's illuminating exhibition, *Picturing Blackness in British Art*. Tudor and Stuart portraits are, however, dominated by the fashionably blanched faces of all-white grandees. No room was found in these pictures for the men and women from Africa, the Caribbean and the Americas who had already settled here.

When black people begin to appear, they are regarded merely as exotic baubles. The servant in *An Elegant Company* Playing Cards, a stilled conversation-piece attributed to Gervase Hamilton, would be easy to miss. He hovers, overdressed and unregarded, on the edges of the scene. Scarcely more important than the household pet beside him, he exists as an amusing adornment for a family determined to boost its status with the latest accessories. At this stage, in the 1720s, black faces were deemed worthy of inclusion in such paintings only if suitably costumed and subordinate to the principal, impeccably white-skinned figures.

All the more remarkable,

then, to find Reynolds devoting a portrait solely to the commanding presence of *A Young Black*. The Tate's two versions of this half-length painting are studio copies of the original in the Menil Foundation Collection at Houston. But they are noble enough to show that Reynolds invested Francis "Frank" Barber, a Jamaican-born servant, with the dignity accorded to many of the artist's aristocratic sitters.

Would he have been willing to do so if Barber was not Samuel Johnson's favourite servant? The question must remain open.

All the same, the decision to depict a black servant in his own right, unencumbered by his master's validating presence, does suggest a welcome reassessment of enlightenment. In the late 18th century, the campaign to abolish slavery was growing in strength. Reynolds's portrait is symptomatic of changing attitudes.

They reach a climax in this exhibition around 1827, when John Simpson painted an intensely dramatic *Head of a Negro*. He looks to his right, just as Barber had done, and both of them are set against freely handled backdrops suggestive of the sky. Simpson's sitter, though, appears more robust and independent. Unlike Barber, whose ruff betokened a man expected to dress correctly at all times, the Negro wears a smouldering maroon jacket slashed open to reveal a prominent expanse of dark, muscular chest. He looks rugged and free, in full-blooded romantic contrast to Reynolds's more discreet sitter. Bold white highlights sing out from his eyes, accentuating the swarthy tones of the surrounding flesh. And his pupils are trained upwards, offering further proof that his horizons are less limited than Barber's had been.

But the improvements should not be exaggerated. Only a couple of years after Simpson's picture, Benjamin Robert Haydon's *Punch or May Day* places the black man firmly in his former



Black in the foreground, but still kept firmly in the background: Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *The Beloved* (1865-66)

position. Although a generous foreground space is allotted to a chimney-sweep, celebrating the festival by dancing as a costumed Jack-in-the-Green, he may well be a white man in sooty make-up. Far more telling is the black servant in the background, mounted on a coach taking a wedding couple away from Marylebone Church. Bride, groom and coach-driver gaze at the pulling-laden panorama of street sellers, pick-pockets and entertainers, but the black footman is expected to stare straight ahead, denying himself the pleasure of scanning street life.

The truth about British attitudes in the 1860s was disclosed half-way through the decade, when Dante Gabriel Rossetti concocted his sumptuous pre-Raphaelite fantasy called *The Beloved*.

The prominence accorded to the black girl in the foreground might suggest, mo-

mentarily at least, that Rossetti wanted to laud her beauty. However, she stares out at us with a troubled expression. Perhaps her frown indicates an awareness that she is simply a foil for the dazzling whiteness of the beloved, who has pulled aside a bridal veil to show off the unblemished sheen of her skin.

Her absolute confidence, buttressed by the admiring attention of her equally pure Caucasian handmaidens, makes the black girl's gaze seem even more perturbed. Although bedazzled in jewellery, and proffering a bouquet to her mistress, she appears nothing more than an outlandish adjunct to the bride's resplendent charms.

After such questionable headiness, it is a relief to reach the 20th century and find black people given adult status

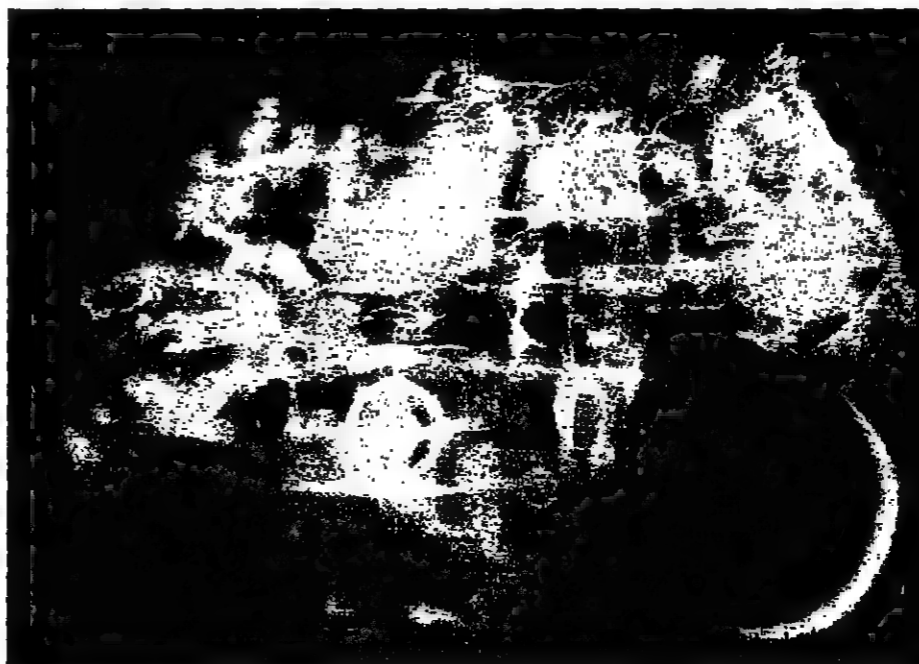
once more. True, Edward Burra finds an exotic allure in the denizens of 1930s Harlem, and places them on a street stagey enough for a sanitised musical version of ghetto life. But Burra makes clear his admiration for the sex, stylish agility of the nonchalant young man flicking his ash on the pavement. The white English artist, finding himself for once in an outsider's position, relishes and maybe yearns for the supposedly unself-conscious vitality of black culture.

The divide is still keenly felt here; but if Stanley Spencer's great painting of *The Resurrection, Cookham* had been included in the exhibition, a far more unifying vision would assert itself. For Spencer universalises his monumental canvas by showing, next to the church porch, a group of black men and women rising from the sun-cracked earth. They join the

villagers of Cookham in a genuinely multi-racial act of renewal, created by an artist who refused to set any narrow ethnic boundaries around his redemptive vision.

The absence of Spencer's masterpiece, on view elsewhere in the Tate, made me realise how rewarding a larger exhibition on this theme would be. On the present occasion, only two artists are chosen to represent contemporary work by black artists. Both Sonia Boyce and Lubaina Himid make memorable contributions, but they could easily have been accompanied by others. I hope *Picturing Blackness* leads on to further and deeper explorations, promoting an enlarged awareness of the myths which continue to hamper our understanding of what the word "British" really means.

Picturing Blackness is at the Tate Gallery, Millbank, London SW1 (0171-837 8000) until Mar 10



Nebula Cluster, 1985, one of the paintings from Aubrey Williams's *Cosmos Series*

piece treads a precarious path between its formal artistic potential and its functional associations. Without really transforming anything, Wilson manipulates the individual elements, making them lean, lie, and sit in touching and humorous relationships to each other. The "true" nature of a filing cabinet, musical instrument case, bed, tin bath, step ladder, or desk remains the same, and yet is fundamentally altered. This work has none of the gravity-defying, virtuoso manipulation that characterises much

current sculpture, but instead encourages free association based on the objects' current position in the gallery and their past use elsewhere. Camden Arts Centre, Arkwright Road, London NW3 (0171-435 2643) to January 21

As the culmination of a five-week residency at Camden Arts Centre, the sculptor Keith Wilson has collected a great deal of furniture and brought it back to base. The result is *Theft by Finding*, a series of arrangements of that furniture in one of the main galleries. Each individual

laboration between the abstract painter Julia Farrer and the experienced printmaker Ian Tyson. Sections of colour are held tight in wedges, while fine black lines impose a monochrome geometric order. The merging of the two disciplines has successfully overcome any deadening notions of formal purity in either medium.

The Eagle Gallery, 159 Farringdon Road, London EC1 (0171-633 2694) until January 20

SACHA CRADDOCK

Black people who lived in Britain were ignored by its artists

ry, the campaign to abolish slavery was growing in strength. Reynolds's portrait is symptomatic of changing attitudes.

They reach a climax in this exhibition around 1827, when John Simpson painted an intensely dramatic *Head of a Negro*. He looks to his right, just as Barber had done, and both of them are set against freely handled backdrops suggestive of the sky. Simpson's sitter, though, appears more robust and independent. Unlike Barber, whose ruff betokened a man expected to dress correctly at all times, the Negro wears a smouldering maroon jacket slashed open to reveal a prominent expanse of dark, muscular chest. He looks rugged and free, in full-blooded romantic contrast to Reynolds's more discreet sitter. Bold white highlights sing out from his eyes, accentuating the swarthy tones of the surrounding flesh. And his pupils are trained upwards, offering further proof that his horizons are less limited than Barber's had been.

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AROUND THE GALLERIES

In the paintings of Aubrey Williams's *Cosmos Series* a number of sparkling, splintered elements spin off against a very dark ground. These are some of the last paintings that Williams made before he died in 1990, and in many ways they anticipate much contemporary painting, with its blurred and fragmented vision. But there is nothing

random about their organisation, or the thinking behind them. In these images that suggest the idea of lift-off into space, Williams, after three decades of painting, evokes the process of achieving an overview, a grasp on reality. At the centre of each of the main pictures are clusters of jostling activity: microbes, mountains, or the sights of a gun erupt

into a sulphuric atmosphere, creating a deliberately ambiguous sense of scale. The October Gallery, 24 Old Gloucester Street, London WC1 (0171-242 7367), until January 27

Virginia Verran's recent paintings use a skid of brush and a flicker of light against dark to suggest changing speed. The paintings are often large enough to reach from floor to ceiling at the Francis Graham-Dixon Gallery. They seem positively to swell, bursting with blurred colour and detail in salmon pinks, reds, and purple-brown blacks. In this rich field of colour, fine sharp points of paint provide sudden opportunities for physical and mental focus, punctuating an otherwise difficult visual journey. If the paintings describe anything at all, they seem to be about the aftermath of an incident rather than the thing itself, a struggle for clarity of vision and memory. Francis Graham-Dixon Gallery, 17-18 Gt Saiton Street, London EC1 (0171-250 1962), until January 20

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POP

Stone Roses/Manic Street Preachers Wembley Arena

WHILE the carpet was rolled back and the Britpop party raged throughout 1995, these two bands might have seemed to be in the kitchen staring at their shoes. In truth, both the Roses and the Preachers were turning adversity into strength.

The Stone Roses, as documented in these pages recently, ended a year of upheaval and backlash by doing the right thing: putting themselves before a still-adoring British public. The five-year hiatus after the Roses' droolingly-received 1989 debut album meant that they spent much of the past 12 months fighting against their own reputation. But a few weeks back in the trenches of live work meant that by the time they got to Wembley, they were cutting an impressive swathe, both on booming anthems such as *I Wanna Be Adored* and *Waterfall* and the Second Coming ballad *10 Storey Love Song*.

But by then, the evening had already become one to remember for another reason. They may put a plaque up outside this chilly citadel to mark the place where Manic Street Preachers came back to life.

The much debated disappearance of the group's rhythm guitarist and lyricist Richey James has cast the Manics into an uncertainty that was itself a tribute to their fellow-ship. His absence threw into doubt the very future of a band that, in three albums

since 1992, had become one of Britain's most vital, most fiery rock properties.

With no word on James's fate, the remaining members decided only recently to enter the studio and begin work on a new record as a three-piece, and this guest slot served as a statement of that intent. In the process, it yelled from the rooftops that, even if a part of their inner selves is still AWOL, the Manics are ready to re-emerge mightier than ever in 1996.

In just 40 minutes, and with no verbal reference to the anguish that led them here, the band vented themselves on angry versions of *You Love Us* and *From Despair to Where*. But with lead singer and guitarist James Dean Bradfield more of a linchpin than even in earlier days, they opened a chest of sparkling new songs including *Design for Life* and *Everything Must Go* that, with synthesizer detail bolted onto their guitar framework, showed a new maturity that was truly invigorating. From despair to here, and then respectfully upwards.

PAUL SEXTON

Baroque of ages

RECITAL

King's Consort Wigmore Hall

APART from the festive crackers spread around the refreshment room, New Year's Eve here was essentially a serious-minded celebration of the past in terms of the present, with a finely ordered programme of (mostly) 17th-century baroque music by the King's Consort, directed from the organ or harpsichord by their founder, Robert King. He had called up a couple of shadowy musical ghosts to stand alongside the more substantial shades of Bach and Telemann.

The music of Pavel Vejsanovsky, a Moravian composer who spent all his life at a provincial ecclesiastical court, has evidently caught King's ear to an extent that he promises, in his admirably lucid programme notes, further future exploration of it. From what I heard here, including a jaunty *Sonata Natalis* for the Christmas season, it sounded decently crafted yet without much arresting spark about it.

Christian Geist, on the other hand, a provincial German musician who found some reputation at the Swedish court in Stockholm, favoured an elegantly expressive style that touched deeper sources of feeling, at least in his setting of the German Lord's Prayer so eloquently sung here by James Bowman. The beauty of his

counter-tenor tone elevated this familiar text to the calibre of a passionate aria threaded over strings and continuo.

But this was eclipsed by the same singer's superb delivery of a sorrowful *Lamentatio* by Johann Christoph Bach (uncle of Sebastian). The word-painting of the text is infused with wonderfully poignant harmonies of voice and strings, to which the theorbo added its distinctive twang to melancholy effect.

The soloist's impeccable style and flexible technique was further extended in a Sebastian Bach cantata, No 170, *Vergnügung Ruh* (O blessed rest), three arias separated by confident recitatives and the first and last arias adorned with grace and spirit in the oboe d'amore solos played by Katharina Spreckelsen. King's unobtrusive but secure direction throughout ensured a constantly benign balance of ensemble giving its benediction to an old year's music.

NOEL GOODWIN

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A-Z OF COSMETIC SURGERY

At the cutting edge of the beauty business

AESTHETIC plastic surgery has had a bad press. Ministers, anxious to cut the NHS bill, invariably discuss cosmetic surgery in disparaging terms and still refer to it as if its only role was to pander to conceit by attempting to give a youthful appearance to ageing faces.

Cosmetic surgery does indeed make people look younger and brighter, but by doing so may alter the lifestyle of the patients, boost their sense of wellbeing and self-esteem, and thereby improve their job opportunities, increase their interests and extend their social horizons. Cosmetic surgeons and dermatologists — whose work involves erasing the ravages of time from the contours and complexion of the face — report increasingly brisk business.

As life in the cities and professions becomes tougher and less considerate, many older people, rightly or wrongly, feel threatened by youth and want to blur the age difference. Barristers, accountants, City solicitors and financiers of both sexes have joined the beauty-conscious woman in asking for the shadows and bags to be removed from under their eyes, wrinkles to be ironed out, and sagging faces to be lifted. Men have not only been investing in products to stimulate hair growth, but have also increasingly been turning to cosmetic surgeons for hair transplants.

TECHNIQUES

TECHNIQUES in face-lifting have improved enormously in the last few years. The fear that after surgery a face would look as taut as the Duchess of Windsor's, or that, like an earlier Duchess of Marlborough, the patient might have to remain hidden from society, is now unnecessary, provided that a good surgeon is employed.

But face-lifting, even with keyhole surgery, is still very complex and requires great skill and a detailed knowledge of anatomy if the result is to be pleasing. Most scars are almost entirely hidden in the hairline — above or behind the ears — and any in front of the ears soon fade.

If there is a price to pay for losing the flabby skin of the neck, the sagging jaw line and the drooping mouth, it is fortunately usually no more than bruising, or a transient numbness where a nerve has been damaged. Very occasionally the injury to the nerve causes permanent damage, and sometimes, particularly in smokers, a poor peripheral circulation leaves a wide scar which the hair cannot hide.

NOSES AND EARS

MANY patients opt for minor degrees of facial reconstruction.

Sagging jaw line, baggy eyes, flabby breasts, prominent nose? Dr Thomas Stuttford on the latest ways in which medical science can achieve a new, improved you

tion. Noses and ears cause constant anxiety. An excessively large nose can be a source of embarrassment, teasing and even bullying of children at school. Most — but not all — adult men learn to tolerate it, but for a woman it can remain a cause of misery.

Not surprisingly reshaping noses was one of the earliest challenges faced by plastic surgeons, and they have now become very proficient at it. The most common problem faced by the doctor practising rhinoplasty is dealing with a nose which is too prominent. In these cases the width of the nose has to be narrowed as well as the bridge lowered.

A flattened nose, whether from inheritance, injury or surgery, can also cause embarrassment by, for instance, making the most amiable person look like an aggressive pugilist. Augmentation rhinoplasty, the insertion of additional bone or cartilage to restore or even create a better framework, can revolutionise somebody's face and at the same time alter other people's perception of the character behind it.

But ears are operated on from the age of six onwards and are usually corrected in childhood, but there is no technical reason why the surgery cannot be performed on an adult. The procedure involves the remodelling of the cartilage in the ear but the scar is behind the ear and is not noticeable after the operation.

EYES

BAGS under the eyes and drooping eyelids are perhaps the most common complaint. Blepharoplasty is the surgeon's answer to the anxiety.

The surgeon removes surplus skin from the eyelids, tightens up the muscles, and takes away any excess fat which is deposited around the eyes. The patient then looks younger and much more alert. Financiers, male as well as female, who are bright and thrusting rather than laid back and inscrutable, frequently request blepharoplasty. Their friends find it hard to pinpoint the difference afterwards, merely remarking on how well they look. If the eyebrows droop as well, these can be hitched up by the incision of a piece of skin

above the eye and stitching. The scar, usually a fine one, is hidden in the eyebrows and the natural skin creases.

A surprising number of people are concerned about shadows around the eye; they feel that this not only looks unattractive but makes them appear permanently tired and ill.

There are three courses for excess eye shadowing. If the veins are too close to the skin, laser treatment may help but the results are often disappointing. More often there is increased pigmentation which gets darker as the patient grows older.

The tendency to excessive pigmentation is usually familial, but rather than blaming ancestors, it would be better to ask your doctor to arrange ultraviolet carbon dioxide laser treatment. Professor Nicholas Lowe of the University of California and the Cranley Clinic in London says that this procedure is usually very effective, particularly when the pigmentation is darkest on the inner side of the orbit nearest to the nose. Similar treatment with the laser is useful for removing excessive pigmentation around the mouth or the brown spots caused by acne or the damage caused to the skin by a lifetime in the sun.

Finally some shadowing is literally just that: shadows caused by loose bags under the eyes. These people would benefit from blepharoplasty.

SKIN

RESURFACING of an ageing skin can be achieved by chemical peeling agents, or by dermabrasion, in which the surface layers of the skin are mechanically worn away by an abrasive wheel. Hyperpigmentation, roughness and fine skin wrinkles can often be removed, or the creases filled out, by the use of Retinova (tretinoin), which needs to be applied daily for several months. It is not recommended for those people who have a personal history, or even a family history, of some types of malignant skin cancers, and must not be used by pregnant women.

Deeper lines and the craters left from acne need filling out with liquid collagen injections. These are not everlasting and need to be repeated comparatively often. A face-lift will

tighten up the skin of the face but tends to leave the deep vertical lines which form around the mouth, and collagen injections are necessary to disguise these.

BREASTS

NOT ONLY faces but also bodies can be remodelled. Breasts can be tightened and augmented, and the laxity which so often follows childbirth can be corrected. Some women worry that their breasts are smaller than average, and they feel others think of them as being less feminine than they would wish. Although the medical evidence has largely exonerated silicone implants, doubts as to their safety remain, so most implants are now made of either soya oil or saline.

Breast reduction in appropriate cases can be very successful and transform a younger woman's social life. Patients need to discuss the operation, and their feelings about it, in detail with the surgeon before it is undertaken, for sometimes anxiety over breast size can conceal deep psychological concerns. Afterwards the breast is scarred, but many women prefer a few neat scars to disproportionately large bosoms which they see as a source of embarrassment.

STOMACH

A FLABBY stomach inevitably causes distress and cannot always be hidden by clothes. Surgeons can remove excessive skin by an operation known as abdominoplasty, but, as with breast reduction, it leaves scars. The scars after abdominoplasty run from above both hips right across the lower abdomen, with the further small scar around the umbilicus, which has to be repositioned in its former natural spot. When there is an excessive roll of fat — the traditional spare tyre — modification by abdominoplasty allows the tissue to be cut away en masse. Liposuction can be used to remove smaller collections of fat.

If your concern is excessive wrinkling, thinning hair, a sagging jaw line, baggy eyes, flabby breasts, protruberant belly, receding chin, or just an ageing face, 1996 could, with the help of a member of the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, be very different.

The association produces booklets for doctors and the general public about the advantages and, perhaps even more importantly, the disadvantages and possible side-effects of the various operations performed by its members. General practitioners will be able to advise on the particular skills of any of the surgeons listed in the membership booklet, discuss the desirability of surgery, and arrange for referral to the appropriate specialist.

● The British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons, The Royal College of Surgeons, 34-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PN



Even with keyhole surgery, face-lifting is still very complex and requires great skill and anatomical knowledge

Men demand the body beautiful

Jeremy Laurance on a boom in male surgery

Increasing demand for cosmetic surgery for men is extending to breast implants to improve the appearance of the male chest. The prospect of adding an effortless extra inch or two to the pectoral area is enticing men to the clinics that have, up to now, catered mainly for women.

The Harley Medical Group, which runs four clinics around the country, says a fifth of its clients were men in 1993 but the proportion rose to a third in 1994 and increased again last year.

The most popular male operation is a rhinoplasty — surgery on the nose, usually to reduce its size or smooth out a bump on the bridge. Breast reduction among men who have acquired excess flab on their chests is also frequently requested. This is achieved by liposuction, which involves inserting a needle and sucking out excess fat.

However, breast augmentation to swell the pectoral muscles is in growing demand. Diane Hanson, manager of the Harley Medical clinic in Birmingham, says that nationally the group is doing two such operations a week. "About half of them are bodybuilders making the finishing touches," she says. "They expose their bodies more than most of us and are conscious of the way they look. Many have a good physique, but there may be one part of their body where they feel they are lacking."

The operation costs £3,500, the same



Bodybuilders seek pectoral appeal

for a woman, and involves the insertion of silicone implants from one to five centimetres thick behind the pectoral muscles, to throw them forward.

In men the implants are inserted through an incision under the arm, where the hair will conceal the scar. In women, who are more likely to shave under their arms, the incision is usually made at the base of the breast.

Stuart, 29, had implants two centimetres thick inserted last November. A sales manager with a company in Birmingham, he has told no one about the operation.

"I work out three or four times a week," he says. "I have a very good physique but I lacked pectoral develop-

ment. When I undressed, it just didn't look right."

Before surgery he had a 46-inch chest and a 30-inch waist but was embarrassed about his appearance. "It stopped me going on holiday," he says. "I wouldn't take my shirt off for anybody. Even my parents don't know about this. I was quite a skinny lad until I took up bodybuilding six years ago. Everything else developed except this — I have big shoulders, big arms, a big back and legs. It made me miserable."

At five feet eight inches tall, he now weighs 15 stone, up from 9½ stone. But despite a punishing exercise regime, his pectorals refused to develop. He has previously had liposuction to keep his waist trim. He says the implant operation was worth the money. "I am not bothered what others think about me. It is the way I feel about myself that matters."

Unlike augmentation, breast reduction is cheaper for men — at between £2,000 and £2,500 — than for women, who are charged £4,000 to £4,500. The operation is more complex in women because of the presence of the mammary gland. "It is much more intricate and involves a lot more surgical tailoring," Ms Hanson says.

The Harley Medical Group's clinics perform more than five times more breast reductions than augmentations on men. Among women, breast augmentation is more popular.

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The benefits of a dental implant

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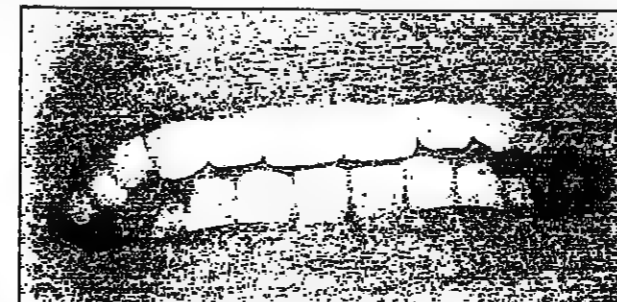
WHEN Martin Amis spent £20,000 on his teeth, in January 1995, the press went wild at his apparent profligacy. What kind of dental procedure could cost the same as a new BMW? The answer, it turned out, was implant reconstruction, one of the greatest — and yet least publicised — developments in modern cosmetic surgery.

Michael Morton, one of fewer than ten British dentists who practise the operation exclusively, says the continued low profile of dental implants is due to a lack of media interest in teeth, which has kept public awareness down, and to the fact that in Britain we still do not expect to pay for dentistry. "In America, Italy, and France," he says, "where private dental care is long established, there is much greater demand from patients." Amis, indeed, was treated in the US.

It is a remarkable operation. A titanium root — a sort

of hollow screw — is screwed into the jaw bone and site of the original root. A titanium post is then screwed into the root and protrudes through the gums into the mouth. A gold and porcelain tooth is built around it, resulting in a chopper that is as good as, if not better than, the original.

"Imagine a young person has had a cycling accident and knocked out a tooth," says Mr Morton, whose *Dental Implants — A Guide for the General Practitioner* is the only British book on the subject. "He will have four options. He can have a bridge, which involves cutting down the two adjacent teeth and damaging them permanently. He can have an adhesive false tooth, although research suggests it will come off at least once a year. Or he can have a denture, which involves a great plastic plate in the mouth for just one or two teeth. Any professional sportsman who has teeth



Implants are as good as, if not better than, the original

missing when he plays, but a full set when he is interviewed, has probably got one of these."

"An implant, however, is a preservative rather than a destructive operation, for it is shown actually to stimulate and maintain the jaw bone. If the patient subsequently breaks his jaw, it will not break at the implant point because the fusion is stronger than bone itself."

The cost of each osseointegrated implant (as opposed to earlier implants, which merely sat in scar tissue above the bone) is around £1,000.

Dental implants have been performed in this country for the past ten years, but it was as long ago as 1965 that a Swedish scientist, Professor

ing titanium chambers in their limbs. Titanium chambers being more expensive than rabbits, he returned to the tested animals after experiments to retrieve his screws, and discovered that it was impossible because the metal had fused to the bone. Realising the dental potential of his discovery he set about developing the implant system — and to this day the Branemark implant is acknowledged as one of the best. And thus future generations of dentists may find patients paying them a visit in the hope of being given rabbit teeth.

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THE TIMES TUESDAY JANUARY 2 1996

Just why do people overeat?



There's fat chance of finding a cure for greed, whatever theories the scientists come up with to explain the tide of obesity, says Nigella Lawson

Scientists, I have to conclude, are nice people. They want us to feel better about ourselves. What's more — self-interest and altruism can, you see, co-exist — they want us to know that it is they themselves who can make us feel so much better.

All those men and women in their white coats have been beavering away in their labs with their rats and their mice, struggling to come up with a miracle pill that will make it easy for us to lose weight. Just a day or so ago, some of their number announced that a breakthrough had been made: the gene that may be responsible for appetite regulation would appear to have been discovered. In other words, no longer do the overweight have to put up with being blamed for lacking in willpower — what they make up for in greed: they are excused; they can simply produce the perfect, genetic excuse. What a comforting message for all of those depressed about their seasonal weight gain and the prospect of the regulatory diet ahead. Happy New Year to everybody.

But, of course, it's not quite like that, is it? There seems to be an enduring fallacy that those who overeat do so because they are hungrier than those who eat less. Within a narrowish band — it might well be the case. But I have never met anyone who overeats steadily — enough to put on troubling amounts of weight — who does so purely out of rampant hunger.

Be honest: those of you who have added to your bulk over Christmas haven't done so because you unaccountably felt hungrier then. You have overeaten because you were

surrounded by food and there wasn't much else to do except eat it. That's the truth, isn't it? Any time I have put on weight, it's been because I've eaten regardless of how hungry I am. So-called comfort eating (I say, so-called, because any comfort the food brings is fleeting and overridden by the discomfort, both physical and mental, that follows) is not prompted by actual hunger. That would be much easier to satisfy. And the difficulty with starting to eat when one isn't hungry is that there is no cue to stop.

Whatever the scientists may say about leptin — the protein that they think might regulate appetite — as long as people are able to eat without feeling the faintest twinge of hunger, they will continue to do so. And interestingly, many studies have shown that most obese people are not deficient in leptin anyway. What scientists have thus concluded is that there is, in fat people, a defective receptor in the brain which prevents the signal from the leptin getting through. I'd be interested to know whether overeating itself — and I mean serious overeating, over time — can throw this receptor off. Because we all know, too, that it is overeating in the first place which makes us feel that we need more food. It's self-perpetuating.

If anything, people who are overweight tend to feel less hungry than those of normal weight. Maybe that's because one of the symptoms, if one can call it that, of the overweight is a fear of hunger. If you eat too much, too often, you will never be in a position of being hungry. When tests have been done on this subject, what's indeed been found is that people of



Now that the season to eat, drink and be merry has passed, millions are viewing their excess pounds with dismay. A weight-loss pill would make a fortune

about average weight tend to use the internal cues of hunger as a prompt to eat, whereas those very much above average weight are stimulated by external cues. In other words, they see a plate of cakes or a table laid with food and immediately consider themselves hungry, whereas it hadn't occurred to them that they were hungry before the delicious vision appeared in front of them.

I must admit I have some sympathy with this way of being. However full-up I am halfway through eating, I find it all but impossible to leave anything on my plate. That's in part due to my upbringing, but also because I'm greedy. Indeed, I have been a restaur-

ant critic for more than a decade, and now write a food column too, and would find both hard without the ability to eat — and what's more to eat pleasurably — when not hungry.

Obscene as that sounds, that's the obvious truth. The trick is, though — and it's the only trick and, therefore, no trick at all — to eat only when hungry, and stop when not, most of the time. Simple and irritatingly true though this is, it isn't, I admit, always easy to follow.

I wonder, anyway, whether it isn't a more normal response to overeat when faced with an overabundance of food than it is to show admirable restraint. Our natural im-

pulses are surely to store up energy supplies: the Homer Simpson-like desire to eat whatever's available whenever it's available must be, somewhere along the line, biologically determined.

I do not mean by this to go over to the other side, as it were. The essence of civilised behaviour is anyway to override the dictates of nature.

Furthermore, from what I can gather from the writings of a larger body of scientists that have come up with the newest key to weight loss, it is not the increase in calorie consumption that is making us fatter, but a decrease in calorie expenditure. In other

words, we don't need to eat less, just exercise more. Everyone has something invested, however, in coming up with a more comfortable solution. One can hardly imagine the fortunes to be made from coming up with the miracle weight-loss pill, regardless of whether it works in the long-term or not.

And, of course, it takes the heat off us, too. We don't — we think — have to struggle ourselves if there's a pill that could do it for us.

But it is strange, because if there's one thing we do know, it is that if calorie consumption exceeds calorie expenditure then we'll put on weight. Tests upon tests have been carried out on people, and nothing has

ever been found to contradict that truth. Those who claimed to eat like a bird but never lose weight were found, on an even only slightly reduced calorie diet, to lose weight; those who claimed they could eat whatever they liked without putting on an ounce, were given a higher-calorie diet and, without any extra exercise to burn those calories off, dutifully put on weight.

But this, I think, is the most telling: some weeks ago, a group of scientists found that their laboratory mice had all put on weight. To make them lose it, they didn't fall around with chemicals and drugs and faulty receptors and what have you. They simply reduced the fat in the mice's diet and

increased the fibre. The mice shed their excess weight, as indeed the scientists knew they would.

But I do agree, it's easier for the mice. They eat what they're given. Rather more effort is required from those of us who face the temptations of the overstocked delicatessen and supermarket and, consequently, the overstocked fridge.

Overeating is practically an occupational hazard of being alive in the consumer age. But one shouldn't get too puritanical about it: flesh is not something to be abhorred, nor food something to be disdained. In culinary matters I concede: greed is good.

But hunger has absolutely nothing to do with it.

Quentin Letts meets Madhur Jaffrey on her home ground — not Delhi or Surrey but Manhattan

Actress who gives spice to our lives



Madhur Jaffrey as Lady Srinevesan, mentor to Una Gwithian (Hattie Morahan) in *The Peacock Spring*

Madhur Jaffrey is like one of those bottles of expensive scent. On her side it should read: "New York. London. Delhi." From the frequency of her appearances in Britain and the RADA-cultivated cadences of that voice — "a pinch of pepper and a sprig of coriander" — many of us probably presumed that she resided in England. The Home Counties, Waitrose and a Mini Metro would suit her tidy image.

In fact, this bright-eyed, successful woman has for 30 years been a New Yorker. She lives on the rump of Greenwich village, south of the oddball Flatiron District, where taxis clunk over bumps in the road and toy wholesalers flash their novelty wares in sooty storefronts. A few streets to the west, Dylan Thomas killed himself by sucking dry a whisky bottle. Across the way from Mrs Jaffrey's apartment block is one of the area's last, Greek-run diners. Its laminated menu offers hash browns, steak, pancake heart attacks and soda gum-rot.

So what is she doing in BBC's New Year drama *The Peacock Spring*, in which she plays wise Lady Srinevesan, patron of poets and mentor to the ripe Una Gwithian (Hattie Morahan)? How does this tally with her downtown Manhattan existence, or with her reputation as the Elizabeth David for all points East of Araby?

In the noisy Greek diner on New York's Sixth Avenue, Mrs Jaffrey appraised the dishevelled waiter's bulging apron before she ordered: "Two poached eggs, a bagel, cawfee!" This from the woman whose dexterity with doliplaza transformed the kitchens of England, whose spice-pummeling pestle and hot zeal lifted curry to art form, from Nuneaton to Norwich.

"You know what, I love hamburgers," she says. "They can be great. And I love this diner." Indeed, she campaigned for its salvation when the landlord recently attempted to evict the Greek family which has run it for years.

It was only a smallish part in *The Peacock Spring*, but Mrs Jaffrey jumped at the idea of two weeks on location in Delhi, her family town. A party scene was shot at the Gymkhana Club, long past its prime, but a place Mrs Jaffrey knew as a girl. "I was there once for a Christmas Eve ball," she says. "I remember the dance so well. All the women wore gorgeous saris, and all the young

men I had crushes on were there. It was a wonderful night full of the promise of love."

Returning to the Gymkhana Club with the film crew, she walked in to the ballroom with Christopher Morahan, the director of *The Peacock Spring*. Before them, a magnificent shaft of light shone through a window. "I was suddenly taken right back to that night when I was young, that evening that was so special," she says.

That romantic story was interrupted by the arrival of the eggs — a tad runny — and served in a cup. They were consumed with care, and a sprinkling of black pepper administered with the little finger held aloft. She continued with talk of far-off India, its mists and wafting woodsmoke complemented by a singing coming from the diner's waffle grille.

The family was brought up in a huge Delhi compound, a series of villas built on land which the family received in exchange for murky political favours to the Raj in the mid-19th century. "I'm sorry to say that our family aided the British during the mutiny of 1857," she says. There were normally about 20 family members in the compound, but sometimes many more.

New York, where Mr Allen plays with the Philharmonic, has been a constant factor. The interest in cooking began when she was living in Golden Green and, in despair at the endless string of cold meals, she wrote to her mother in Delhi to ask for decent recipes.

When she reached America, people were intrigued by her Indian dishes so she turned her mother's letters into a book. Further volumes followed.

She has gone on to do television and radio work, has immersed herself in the family — of her three daughters, two are mothers — and has become accepted by the Merchant Ivory clique. There is unspecific talk of novel-writing and film direction this year.

All of the time, however, acting has nibbled away at her soul, and she has taken numerous roles over the years, from *Cotton Mary* to *Heat and Dust*, *Vanya on 42nd Street*, a stage *Medea* and now *The Peacock Spring*.

Given the success of her cookery books Mrs Jaffrey probably need not work, but sloth is not in her nature. "I was born into a comfortable caste [*kayastha*, the caste of senior officials and mandarins] but as a woman I had none of the fruits of that caste," she says. "The men in India are not motivated. But I was not born a man." With curry houses finally making headway in New York, she probably also has a chance to expand her cooking interests. She is consultant to one of Manhattan's smarter Indian restaurants.

But what America really seems to suit is her wanderlust, her sparkle. "Ah, the land of Marlon Brando!" she exclaimed to herself when she first arrived. She delights in the new, the imaginative.

When Sir Edwin Lutyns was planning New Delhi he invited Mrs Jaffrey's grandfather, a friend, to take a parcel of prime land in the new project for a bargain price. "Grandfather told Lutyns, 'You mean that jungle? No way!'" Mrs Jaffrey says. "That land," she says with a grin, "would now be worth many millions. Many, many!"

If Lutyns had put the same proposition to his old friend's granddaughter, one imagines, the answer might have been more positive.

So much has happened since, but

Why lawyers in traumatic trials should be offered counselling sessions to cope with the stress Page 29

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Part two of *The Peacock Spring* is on BBC1 tonight at 9.30pm.

The sands have not run out

Anthony Parsons on a peaceful transition in Saudi Arabia

Regimes in Arabia have two defining characteristics: their longevity, and their ability to baffle the West by finding ways round crises which from outside look insurmountable.

Assuming that King Fahd's delegation of authority to Prince Abdullah is permanent, the latter will be fifth in succession since the founder of the Kingdom, Abdul Aziz Ibn Saud, died in November 1953. Previous successions have taken place in far more troubled circumstances, such as when King Faisal succeeded King Saud at the height of pan-Arab republicanism (Nasserism) in 1964, or when King Faisal was murdered by a member of the family in 1975. On both occasions, family solidarity weathered the storm. There is no reason why the same should not be the case today.

A smooth transition in Saudi Arabia is as important to the West as it ever was. The end of the Cold War has made little difference. The Arabian peninsula still contains a substantial proportion of the world's oil reserves. Anarchy or radical change in Saudi Arabia would have an immediate impact on the stability of the smaller states, from Kuwait to Oman. Strategically, Saudi Arabia lies between the area of the Arab-Israeli dispute, now at a delicate stage, and the potentially menacing states to the East, namely Saddam Hussein's Iraq and the Shia Muslim theocracy of Iran. The key role of Saudi Arabia in operation Desert Storm five years ago is fresh in our minds, and the mullahs in Tehran have been, to say the least, on uneasy terms with the fundamentalist Sunni regime in Riyadh since the fall of the Shah in 1979.

Many commentators have recently predicted trouble for the monarchial regimes in the peninsula. But in my view, the ruling families in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states are under less external pressure than at any time since the 1950s. They survived with difficulty the tempest of the socialist, republican, anti-imperialist Arab nationalism which swept away the Egyptian and Iraqi monarchs in the 1950s and which destabilised the whole region until it died with the catastrophic defeat of Arab arms at the hands of the Israelis in June 1967.

Thereafter, Arab public opinion was inflamed by the Palestine problem under the leadership of the PLO, and regimes such as Saudi Arabia which maintained close relations with the West had to stay close to an Arab consensus. In fact, by the 1980s Saudi Arabia had taken the lead in formulating Arab policy on this question. Then, throughout most of the 1980s, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States were dangerously close to the longest and bloodiest interstate war since 1945, the Iran-Iraq conflict launched by Saddam's invasion of south-west Iran in 1980. There is little doubt that without the help of oil-rich Arab states, Iraq would have been beaten, rather than forcing a draw.

In 1990, the underlying truth was at last revealed. The threat of territorial aggression against Saudi Arabia and the Gulf, as opposed to subversion, came not from revolutionary Iran, but from sister Iraq. Few people doubt that after gobbling up Kuwait, Saddam would have gone on to dominate Saudi Arabia through a permanent threat of invasion, a threat which he would not have hesitated to implement had he been allowed to get away with his Kuwaiti adventure.

Today all those threats have subsided. Iraq has been neutralised by Desert Storm and the continuing UN sanctions. The revolutionary fire is dying down in Iraq, although there are still ardent spirits who would be glad to stir up trouble among the Shia communities on the Arab shore of the Gulf. However, the mullahs have their hands full with economic recovery, and I do not believe that they have territorial ambitions in the Arab world.

Pan-Arabism is a dead duck; there is no longer such a thing as an Arab consensus on Palestine as the so-called "peace process" edges forward. In any case, Saudi Arabia is widely recognised as a leading player in the Arab League, and it is many years since any but maverick regimes publicly criticised Saudi policy. Before 1990, American support for Saudi integrity had to be kept "over the horizon" because of wider Arab sensitivity about Washington's relationship with Israel. Saddam's naked aggression against a sister Arab state changed that.

What threat there may be to stability comes from within. Growing populations and the increasing complexity of government have eroded the direct access between rulers and ruled, which used to be a partial substitute for democracy. Declining oil prices and the costs of the Gulf War have made it increasingly difficult to maintain expensive social and economic infrastructures such as free education, health services and subsidised housing, without resort to significant taxation. Education and travel are heightening political aspirations among the younger generation.

These factors could well combine to generate strong pressure for changes to a system of government which seems to have more to do with the 18th than the 20th century. If the peninsula were an oasis of autocracy in a sea of established democracies, such pressure could become irresistible; but it is not. Any-one seeking radical change in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf has only to look at the dire nature of neighbouring alternatives to wonder whether it would not be better to leave well alone — or at most to seek gradual rather than violent change.

Sir Anthony is a Middle East specialist and former Ambassador to Tehran.

The system of rule may be antique but it is stable



Not so very pastoral

Many a rural scene masks suffering and poverty as grim as any city's

Here we go! The new year barely begun, and already the bile is rising nicely. Never mind "Bishop slams Jackson" and "Portillo slams Nicholson"; let us start 1996 by considering "Aga Saga Queen slams Cotswold village". Which tabloid headline chronicles a magnificently silly conflict between the novelist Joanna Trollope and the unremarkable settlement of Aston Magna, Gloucestershire.

Ms Trollope — with, as she shall see, the most humane of intentions — described the village as "a truly dismal place", with problems in common with Manchester's Moss Side. Of course the meant to be provocative; if you want to wake up an audience of 30 in *Stow-on-the-Wold*, all experts agree, provocation is the quickest way to do it. Her remarks were made seven weeks ago in a speech on behalf of the Gloucestershire Community Foundation; they caused a small, local stir for all of five minutes. Rural umbrage travels slowly but surely: within a week or two the tabloid headline appeared, and now the incident has been given a fresh lease of life by the shootings in Moss Side at the weekend, forming as they do a nice contrast with the starry-eyed return of the intelligentsia from their idyllic Christmas in Much-Wittering-in-the-Saeb.

So for yesterday's *Daily Telegraph*, an Aston Magna parish councillor and a chap from the Gloucestershire Police were wheeled out to damn Joanna Trollope again. They even found a Methodist minister in Moss Side to get huffy at the comparison, saying "the communities are very different and it is difficult to find any parallels".

Which is (sorry, Minister) bunkum. Of course there are parallels between urban poverty and the rural kind. A nice view does not neutralise debt and despair, nor prevent you being old and cold, young and hopeless, or afraid of your violent husband. Perhaps it just takes a middle-aged literary lady to admit it. A novelist, after all, is a professional people-watcher and not a politician: Joanna Trollope has nothing to gain or lose by telling the truth, and so feels no need to exercise craven diplomacy or even the sort of creaking political correctness so prevalent in *The Archers*. Therefore she is free to say, in terms as strong as it takes, that deprivation, sadness, loneliness and sin exist in the rolling countryside as well as the teeming city.

After all, it was another novelist, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who had Sherlock Holmes observe that "the lowest and vilest alleys of London do not present a more dreadful record of sin than does the smiling and beautiful countryside". He was talking about domestic crime: the unseen cruelties in the remote house and the lack of neighbours to intervene (today, after the West affair, he would have to admit that a city street is no longer much protected). Joanna Trollope, on the platform of a charity foundation, was drawing attention to the rural incidence of poverty, unemployment, poor housing, bad health, lone parenthood and the temptation to crime and drugs (Cirencester, for all its prettiness, has a teenage drug problem). She said, and should not repent saying, that it is cruel and silly for outsiders and weekenders and insulated parvenus to think that "the country" is somehow magically protected from these things. She also said that it is the duty of the prosperous country-dweller to deploy "money, effort, and thoughtful care" on the neighbourhood.

Here is an old-fashioned kind of truthfulness: a level gaze which does not avert itself from the scruffy hopelessness of those council estates pushed to the edge of villages, from the decline of village shops and transport, the dearth of employment to replace traditional farming and "un-economic" small-town manufacturing. It is not a patronising eye, but a clear one which acknowledges the despair of young people whose chance of a home is still, even in recession, being snatched away by weekend cottage prices. It is not unreasonable to see both insult and injury when London weekenders come down for new year with their cars stacked high from Waitrose on the King's Road. To acknowledge rural problems is not to belittle villagers, but to take their side.

Which, traditionally, the rural probos have seen as their natural job. There have, admittedly, been high-handed landowners who oppressed their tenants and resisted innovation and growth; but there is also a plentiful if unsung band who have run housing associations, given them land, encouraged jobs, defended traditional trades and lobbied for services. One of the problems of the inner cities, indeed, is the lack of such a loyal middle class: a *Brixton* boy who makes good (like John Major) does not feel it natural to stay in Brixton and fight for it; he goes off somewhere nicer. Say what you like about the old Lord and Lady Bountiful, they stuck around.

Indeed, one of the healthy things about village life — and the reason that even the poorest countryside is not actually as bad as Moss Side or St Paul's — is what has been called its "natural democracy". Bob Holman, the maverick social scientist who put himself where his mouth was and moved to live in the run-down Glasgow satellite town of Easterhouses, recently wrote that whether in town or country, it is a Christian duty for the middle class not only to support the poor in principle, but to live near them. Things, he says, would be better if we did not hide in executive estates or affluent enclaves, but came geographically closer to the poor. Our sheer talent for fussing would then guarantee better schooling, policing, transport and medical services for all: community of interests would produce Mr Major's famous "nation at ease with itself".

In some villages, this happens: people tolerate one another's weaknesses and exploit one another's strengths. The big house and the small ones can fight side by side for the school, the pub, the hall, the local bobby; meanwhile the rich man in his castle has to be civil to the poor man at his gate, because otherwise the next time his tiles blow off or his moles need catching he won't get help for weeks. The mother-and-toddler group provides a lifeline for the single girl living higger-mugger with her parents and her illegitimate baby, but

also for the commuter's lonely wife with far more money but just as great a need for friends and baby playmates.

In such communities crime is often nipped in the bud by public pressure, in just the way Sherlock Holmes said it would in the "vile alleys" of Victorian London. Admittedly such pressure can lead to problems like the Harleston vigilantes, who were jailed for detaining a suspected motorbike thief; but on balance that is probably better than the terrified urban habit of turning a blind eye. One of the most alarming things about the growing suburbanisation of the countryside is that commuter villages are now spawning private "executive" estates which do not communicate with their council or traditional neighbours. In such a village, a few years ago, a young mother died unnoticed, and her child starved.

It may often be scruffy, and sometimes inbred, but the very stagnation of traditional rural life has its advantages. There is one small East Anglian town, an unemployment black-spot, which nonetheless has a lower incidence of cruelty to children than any parallel urban community. Why? Because there is always a forceful grandmother or aunt to interfere. East Anglia is rich in single mothers — thanks to the American Air Force — and the story has it that a well-meant but ill-informed charity set up a "drop-in centre" for them. Nobody dropped in. The girls were all round at their mothers' or their nans', and took exception to being classified as a problem.

Such flashes of community spirit are to be cherished, whether in Essex or Orkney; cities could learn from them. Should have learnt from them years ago, instead of pulling down neighbourly streets to build tower blocks. Town planners could also reflect how much lower the rate of delinquency seems to be when children have access to wide green spaces in which they can play. Education planners could look at village schools and admit that, for young children at least, small is very beautiful.

But none of these glories of rural life need blind us to the truth of what Joanna Trollope said: that human beings in the countryside often suffer, albeit more quietly, as much as those in cities. A beautiful backdrop does not guarantee a good life, nor the safe and enlightened upbringing of children. It is almost too obvious to say. Only the row proves that someone had to say it.

Libby Purves

Dramatic gift

A WELSH drama school has been given more than £300,000 towards new rehearsal rooms by its most famous alumnus, Sir Anthony Hopkins. With the aid of a sizeable grant from the National Lottery, his donation enables the Welsh College of Music and Drama in Cardiff to undertake a £2 million development scheme in the 19th-century building which once housed Lord Bute's grace and favour flats.

Sir Anthony was unavailable yesterday, but the college's principal, Edmond Ffyt, is said to be "over the moon". Hopkins's former tutor, Tony Carter, 67 — who gave

the baddie of *Silence of the Lambs* his music lessons in the 1950s — says the donation sets the new year off on a cracking note.

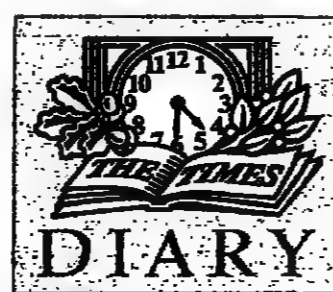
"We've had students here who think they're going off into a different world when they cross the Severn Bridge, and they never return," he said. "But Tony's Welsh roots are very strong. He often comes back and gives masterclasses."

Carter adds that he would never have suspected in the 1950s that the apple-cheeked young Hopkins would become a movie star who can command \$5 million per picture. "He wasn't bad on the piano though, I'll say that for him."

Exaggerated

IF GETTING down to Christmas thank-you letters is a bore, spare a thought for Hughie Green, folks. The former host of *Opportunity Knocks* plans to spend the new year replying to a pile of 700 letters from admirers distressed by exaggerated reports of his death.

The body-blow came in a throw-away line before Christmas in the BBC's comedy series *The Vicar*



of Dibley, starring Dawn French. "There hasn't been a bus through the village since Hughie Green died," remarked a joker, prompting a deluge of concerned letters to the Canadian-born septuagenarian and his agent. Mr Green's claspometer has gone nuclear — he is furious that the Corporation has so far refused to correct the slip. "They reckon they're God Almighty," he barked.

Humph

IN CATTY circles, the claws are out for John Major, who was awarded honorary membership of the Cats Protection League after Humphrey, the Downing Street cat, slunk back to No 10 in the summer.

So appalled are some cat-lovers by Major's new feline fellowship

that they have been resigning from the league in protest. They believe government policies have been less than friendly to their furry friends.

John Major, as Chancellor and subsequently as Prime Minister, has been responsible for economic policies which have caused a lot of hardship, with people losing jobs and houses and having to give up their pets," grumbles one resignee. "And the National Lottery has been bad for animal charities. It was a cruel act to give Major this honour. Does he even know Humphrey? I shouldn't think so, he was just cashing in."



"Amazing how quickly a Tory can change colour"

A vital factor in the success of the New Year's Eve policing of Trafalgar Square can now be revealed. It was the Met's mobile canteen, where bobbies could avail themselves of a steaming cuppa, which for security reasons went under the codename Teapot One.

Still sparkling

AMERICA has been starry-eyed about the late Jackie Kennedy's 40-carat sparkler, a paperweight of a ring given her by Aristotle Onassis after they married in 1968. Along with other effects, including President Kennedy's desk, it is to be auctioned by Sotheby's in New York this week.

The rock, valued at more than \$300,000, was cut from one of the biggest diamonds ever discovered. But gossip on the glitter circuit suggests that it could soon be under the cutter's knife again.

"The savviest jewellers can't wait to grab it at the auction," explains a gem merchant. "The plan is to cut it down into 40 to 80 little diamonds, mount them in a variety of ways, and market them as Jackie relics at \$2,000 to \$4,000 apiece."

With peace being declared in the Balkans, Billy Graham's evangelical son Franklin has lost little time in getting out there to spread



Rocker Jackie the word. His moustachioed minder, who sports a stetson and Cuban heels, has been an incongruous sight in Zagreb.

Their island pride

Magnus Linklater watches a titanic struggle in Orkney

The crowds who saw in the new year beneath the great sandstone Cathedral of St Magnus in Orkney were in boisterous mood. Most clutched bottles of whisky which they were cheerfully ready to share, despite a bitter north-west wind, they lingered on Broad Street long after the pipe band had given up, exchanging kisses and drams with equal enthusiasm; there were signs that a long night of hard drinking lay ahead. Meanwhile, Kirkwall, the island capital, looked like a town under siege: shop-fronts boarded up, doorways protected by wooden beams, alleyways blocked off. This was not, however, a protest against mass hooliganism, but a precaution in anticipation of what was to happen later in the day.

No one is quite sure how the tradition of "the Ba" began, but it must be one of the most ancient as well as most ferocious new year sports in Britain, dating back possibly to the struggles for power between the Earls and Bishops of Orkney in the 12th century. As the stroke of 1 o'clock yesterday, a round leather ball was tossed into the assembled crowds waiting at the Mercat Cross, and for hours afterwards a titanic struggle developed, with heaving scrums formed by 200 young men (this is not a game for women) surging through the narrow streets as they attempted to gain possession of the ball. For long minutes they piled up, immobile, against a wall, then suddenly they were off, hurtling in a breakneck scramble down the pavement. It looked frankly terrifying; the crush of bodies against stonework seemed to threaten inevitable death by suffocation. But I saw only one youth dragged from the crowd for first aid.

The town is divided into two — the "uppies", trying to smuggle the ball into their own territory half-way up the town, and the "doodies", aiming to land it in the harbour at the bottom end. It is rough stuff, with broiles and broken ribs routine. But though it is a violent spectacle, it has its subtleties. There are feints and false breakaways to fool the other side, and a series of complex instructions from seasoned players who seem to have some idea about what is happening deep inside the maul. The only sport bearing any similarity to it is the Eton Wall Game, where you may also never see the ball from start to finish. But that is insipid by comparison.

One can well believe that the Ba goes back to the days when the Vikings introduced it as a game to be played with a human head as the ball. Its start at the foot of St Magnus Cathedral is entirely appropriate, for here is a direct link to the Viking era. Founded in memory of Earl Magnus of Orkney, who was murdered in 1117 by his cousin Hakon, the cathedral was built by Magnus's nephew, Earl Rognvald, one of the great medieval crusaders. It was Rognvald who took a fleet of 15 longships through the Mediterranean to Jerusalem in 1149, and who, on his return, hung his sails to dry on the pillars of the half-completed building. He was a fighter, as well as a man of God, and he would have understood the Ba.

At various times, the elders and sheriffs of Kirkwall have attempted to ban it, judging it too uncouth a sport for a civilised city. But the game survived because the tradition was too strong to be broken; and today it is more popular than ever, spawning other Ba's on Christmas Day. It is more than a quaint custom: it is a vigorous expression of Orkney's strong, separate identity.

That separatism has, if anything, been reinforced in recent years. Orkney has always been a self-reliant place, and the Thatcherite notions of private enterprise and resourcefulness have suited it better than more dependent counties on the mainland. It is something of an irony that Margaret Thatcher, who was so committed to the United Kingdom, did more to emphasise a sense of individuality in its far-flung communities than any of her more devotion-inclined predecessors. There has been a steady sense of alienation from central government in Orkney since then. It has not translated into votes for the Scottish nationalists, nor even for the idea of separate status for the islands, but it has certainly undermined the Conservative cause. It would be hard to envisage this constituency ever again supporting a Tory candidate; yet until 1980, when Jo Grimond won it for the Liberals, Orkney and Shetland voted Unionist.

It is a lesson that Labour too would do well to bear in mind. Places like Orkney and the remotest rural communities of Britain are not instinctively in sympathy with new Labour. There is a sense that Tony Blair is every bit as much a prisoner of metropolitan bias as John Major, and if he is to demonstrate that he stands for all of Britain he needs to show that he is aware of its discrete needs, interests, and traditions.

I suggest he head North this time next January, ready to take part in the Ba. He should bring a stout pair of boots, a half-pint of whisky in his back-pocket, and a strong constitution. As this column went to press last night, the game was still in progress, five hours after it began, and just 500 yards from its starting-point.



Hopkins: generous

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PRINCELY PROBLEMS

Prince Abdullah must reassert leadership at home and abroad

Saudi Arabia is the world's largest oil exporter, one of Britain's biggest export markets and a country whose stability and well-being is a vital Western interest. Since the 1991 Gulf War, however, the kingdom has been going through a difficult period. It has run up a huge budget deficit, partly because of the war's costs but also through profligacy. Relations with Yemen and Gulf neighbours have deteriorated, while suspicion of Saddam Hussein's Iraq remains high.

Saudi Arabia has seen demonstrations in its heartland by fundamentalists, led by dissident clergy, and has been subjected to telling denunciations by exiles and Iranian propaganda. A bomb blast last month that killed four Americans brought the spectre of terrorism suddenly close to home. And King Fahd, the shrewd but cautious ruler for the past 13 years, suffered a debilitating stroke last month that further spurred rumours of family infighting and dynastic uncertainty.

The King's decision, therefore, to entrust the rule of his country temporarily to his half-brother, Crown Prince Abdullah, is both sensible and welcome. Saudi Arabia needs, above all things, to regain self-confidence after a bad attack of jitters. Despite lurid tales of corruption and predictions of the fall of the House of Saud, there is no evidence that the country is in a pre-revolutionary ferment, that its strong religious and tribal traditions are being undermined or that the system, authoritarian and intolerant though it may be, cannot adapt itself gradually to the demands of a more sophisticated society. What is needed, however, is confident leadership, both to confront the social challenges at home and assert the leadership of the Arab world which the country's wealth, oil reserves and influence as the historical heartland of Islam thrust upon Riyadh.

Two challenges in particular face Saudi Arabia, which the Crown Prince must make

his priorities. The first is economic. For the past five years Saudi Arabia has lived far beyond its means, running up an enormous budget deficit through extravagant hand-outs to the 5,000 royal princes, generous subsidies on utilities and transport, and, it has to be admitted, unnecessarily large purchases of Western weapons. For two years the Government stalled, withholding payment to contractors and to private businesses. This was very damaging to its international business reputation and provoked deep discontent in the burgeoning Saudi merchant class, many of whom suffered big losses. Now the Government has grasped the nettle of economic discipline, and this year's budget, unveiled yesterday, holds down spending while maintaining the recent cuts in subsidies and confirming price rises. That economic discipline must be reinforced by more privatisation of the bloated state sector.

His second priority must be the social malaise that has been fanned by Islamic radicals. One of their targets has been corruption, especially within the Royal Family. Prince Abdullah, an austere and personally devout man, is less likely to incur their opprobrium. He must, however, ensure that the law is applied fairly and equally and that bribery is suppressed. He must move swiftly to bolster the influence of the progressive and quasi-democratic Consultative Council, while trying to cut back the influence of ultra-conservative and obscurantist religious elders.

The West should not be surprised if the Crown Prince — whose formal title as King may soon be confirmed — draws back from his brother's close dependence on the West. What matters is not that the Saudis copy Western ways and policies; the country's strategic importance depends more on stability, continuity and steady adaptation to its international role. For that, the House of Saud must change as swiftly as the country.

EMMA AMONG THE LIBERALS

Further defections are unlikely in the near future

For much of the past year, the Liberal Democrats have been reduced to observer status while the Conservative majority in the Commons disintegrated and Labour hogged the opposition limelight. Now and again, the Lib Dems would win a by-election or perform well in local elections — but their successes were always overshadowed by Tony Blair's.

This year, however, has begun with a dazzling fireworks display. Emma Nicholson's defection to Paddy Ashdown's party could not have been better news for him. It lends credibility to a party that had been all but eclipsed by New Labour. It gives force to the Liberal Democrats' claim to be a respectable repository for the votes of disaffected Tories. And her reasons for making the shift must have rung many a bell with disillusioned supporters of her former party, some of whom may now follow her lead.

Miss Nicholson will not mingle altogether comfortably with the open-toed sandals of the Liberal Democrats. But she has enough in common with the patrician tendency of Menzies Campbell, David Steel and Roy Jenkins. As well as her European federalist beliefs, her humanitarian internationalism — displayed to the full in her defence of the Iraqi Kurds — sits easily with Paddy Ashdown's party than with her former colleagues.

Her decision to join the Liberal Democrats rather than Labour is critical to the centre party's claim to chief opposition status in the West and South-West. Given our electoral system, the Lib Dems have to be a regional party or they are nothing — if

their votes are too evenly spread around the country, they are doomed to come second and third in every constituency but rarely to win a seat.

The territory to which they have now laid a claim runs west of a line from Hastings to Swindon, excluding the big cities. But there was a danger that Labour's ascendancy would put even this area in jeopardy. In most of the Lib Dems' target seats, Labour comes a poor third. Yet if enough former Tory voters switched to Labour at the next election, the sitting Tory candidates could hold on to their seats simply by splitting the opposition. Miss Nicholson's choice of the Liberal Democrats will remind those voters who want to oust the Conservatives in this part of England that they will have to vote tactically for the centre party.

She may also have helped to assuage some doubts in voters' minds about voting Liberal Democrat. The centre party has been putting out conflicting messages lately. Sensing an electoral opportunity with Mr Blair's lurch to the Right, Mr Ashdown has sometimes looked as if he was trying to outflank Labour on the Left. This might have had the merit of picking up votes from radical socialists — but it was not what wavering Conservatives wanted to hear. Miss Nicholson's conversion could reassure them.

So is she likely now to be joined by other former colleagues? Parliamentary arithmetic makes more defections unlikely in the near future. As the Government's majority nears vanishing point, the next two MPs who crossed the floor would be personally blamed for precipitating a general election.

PANTO BRUNO

A chorus of boxing fans surrounds the ring, waving Union Jacks and chanting: Rule Britannia for you know Who — of course, our boy BRUNO. There is nothing like a name In this sporting panto game. So in this first week of pantomime Frank's the hero of our rhyme. Frank's the first true Brit to win A heavyweight title in the ring. As well as playing Mother Goose, Dick Whittington and Puss in Boots, Cinderella, the Sleeping Beauty, And Sinbad the Sailor, dark and fruity. Mystic Puss in Boots stares into her crystal ball, and intones in a spooky purr: Scorpions are brave and proud. They never speak their thoughts aloud. Devious and somewhat wary Like Mitterrand and Archbishop Carey. Sometimes silent as a frozen spigot. Viz, horsey-blinkered Lester Piggott. My prediction for 1996 is that Scorpions will improve their communication skills, know what I mean, Harry? And in addition become more efficient at their work. Chorus gasps Ooooo. Demon Promoter: Efficient? Scorpions Bruno is not efficient enough to punch his way into a packet of Grape Nuts even without his gloves on. He has a plastic chin and a left jab as soft as a powder-puff. He still has not learnt to hang on to his opponent and pinion his arms in order to protect himself when he is in trouble. As for calling himself heavyweight

champion of the world, there are a dozen fighters calling themselves that in the murky alphabet soup of showbiz, avarice and fraud that prize-fighting has become. No fewer than 22 flabby fantasists have been "heavyweight champions of the world" since the last undisputed champion, Mike Tyson, was relieved of his belt by Buster Douglas in Tokyo four years ago. Tyson will murder Bruno, as he did last time, if they eventually get into the ring together this year. You should advise your boy to stick to playing Mother Goose or to celebrity advertising, exhorting us to slosh HP sauce on our chips. Bruno should give up the men in tights. And stick with the nicer men in tights. Chorus boo, "Oh no he shouldn't", "Oh yes, he should." Mystic Puss in Boots: Take a dive. Take a count. Demon Promoter: For happy endings are the motor Of rap, pantomime and astrology. So I predict, without apology, A prosperous year for your boy Frank. With big enough deposits to sink his bank. For the British love a loser chump Such as Eddie the Eagle or Forrest Gump. And if Frank meets Tyson in the ring Our Scorpions Bruno has learnt to sting. Final chorus of riotous boxing fans: For Demon Promoter don't give two hoots. We believe in mystic moggy in Boots. We love Frank, and Frank loves us. This year at last he'll catch the bus. Though the black arts of fisticuology Are as hard to read as Scorpions of astrology.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Folly of quotas in a 'common pond'

From Mr David B. Thomson

Sir, The letters from Sir Anthony Meyer and from Professor John Shepherd in support of EU fisheries policy (December 20) ignore the EU's role in bringing about the current stock depletion and excess fleet capacity. Both writers continue to put faith in a discredited quota system which could never conserve stocks as presently constructed and administered.

Your editorial on the same day, "Fish and folly", is much nearer the mark in highlighting the insanity of the "discards" — fish thrown back as over quota — directly resulting from the EU quota system. You also rightly attribute blame to the EU subsidy of excess fleets; there would be no excess-vessel problem if only British vessels fished in British fishing grounds.

The creation by the former EEC of a "common pond" for all European vessels (no other group of sea-fishing countries has agreed to such foolishness) has allowed Denmark, France, The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Spain to send their fishing fleets into British and Irish waters: that is why we have excess fishing capacity. Already British fishermen lose up to half their fishing boats to make room for European vessels.

The EU quota system is even more iniquitous in its effect on our fisheries. The amount of fish dumped at sea as a direct result of the system (or landed illegally) is believed to be equal to or greater than the official catch. This makes a mockery of the claims that smaller quotas would conserve fish.

The fisheries policy of the EU will result in the destruction of small traditional fishing communities as they lose their fishing livelihood for ever. This contrasts with what is happening in most of the rest of the world — eg, in Japan, New Zealand and the US, where traditional fishers have their share of and access to marine resources enshrined in law.

The EU is having to renegotiate its fishery agreement with Senegal because it is resulting in the destruction of inshore fisheries. Irish, Scottish and Cornish fishermen must wish their political representatives would do the same.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID B. THOMSON,
Cloverdale, Kimberley Street,
Lissiemouth, Morayshire, Scotland.
December 26.

From Mrs Christina Speight

Sir, The Spanish fishing fleet has almost eliminated fish stocks in its own waters. Now it is not only being allocated a quota in British waters but is also, with the Dutch, allowed to use some of the British quota as well.

British fishermen with a quota of fish caught rather than fish landed could, and would in their own interests, ensure the management of remaining stocks. Landings in Britain are closely supervised by inspectors, but press reports suggest that Spanish inspectors have little control over fish landings in Spain.

In addition, the Danes are taking large quantities of immature North Sea fish to feed to pigs. Meanwhile all countries continue to overfish their quotas under the CFP and to dump much of the surplus, dead, back into the sea.

So far from allowing fishing policy to be determined by majority voting in the Council of Ministers, largely by countries not involved in the problem, the answer lies in repatriating control to the countries bordering the fishing areas. Certainly this involves Britain's withdrawal from the CFP, and this in its turn requires Britain to withdraw from the EU.

This is precisely the policy which the UK Independence Party has been proposing since it was founded. In justice to our British fishermen, and to ensure future fish stocks, it is the only way to proceed.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTINA SPEIGHT,
20 Ramillies Road, W4.
December 26.

From Mr Mark Hamer

Sir, Sir Anthony Meyer pleads the cause of the European Commission to "champion the general and the long-term interest", pointing to the "folly of attempting to run the EU on the sole basis of inter-governmental co-operation". I wholly disagree.

Left to its own devices, the Fisheries Commission has proved that it will act in favour of some member countries to the detriment of others. Last month it agreed to pay Morocco no less than £350 million for a four-year agreement to permit Community vessels — ie, mainly Spanish — to fish in their waters. Whilst the agreement was being negotiated Spanish vessel-owners were given about £20 million "to tide them over". Such largesse for the alienated British fishing industry (in which I worked for over 30 years) is unheard of.

The vast majority of people in our fishing communities support the Save Britain's Fish campaign, whose objective is to take our country out of the common fisheries policy and bring our 200-mile limit under British control. It can and must be done. Failure to do so will result in the total collapse of our precious British fish stocks for all time.

Yours faithfully,
MARK HAMER,
6 Hazelwood Close,
Thornham Cleveleys, Lancashire.
December 27.

Institute and the spirit of Auckland

From Mr Peter R. C. Williams

Sir, An uninformed reader of Baroness Chalker's letter of December 22, in response to Mr Derek Ingram and his co-signatories (December 19), might be forgiven for thinking that the Government's role vis à vis the Commonwealth Institute is that of St George riding to the rescue of an innocent victim threatened by hostile forces. In reality, of course, the victim's plight is the direct result of the Government's sharp reduction in its grant.

As a consequence, the number of Commonwealth Institute staff has fallen from 120 in 1987 to 90 in 1991, when the current director-general assumed office, and to 36 today. If the Government's current intentions regarding funding support are put into effect that number could be only 20 by the early summer of 1996. In March the Commonwealth Institute in Scotland is to close. 18 months or so before HMG hosts the next Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting, probably in Edinburgh.

Lady Chalker was a member of the British delegation to the last Common-

wealth summit, held in Auckland last month. There the Prime Minister, along with his Commonwealth colleagues, supported the proposal that Heads of Government endorse wider knowledge of the Commonwealth as a key strategy for furthering the Commonwealth's objectives. This was oddly at variance with HMG's reported veto of a paragraph in the draft communiqué commending the work of the institute.

Lady Chalker's latest affirmation of government willingness to help the institute is welcome: continuing government support, both political and material, is crucial to its future. But the level of this support has to be more fully commensurate with that clearly required by the spirit of the Auckland communiqué.

Yours etc,
PETER R. C. WILLIAMS
(Deputy Executive Chairman,
Council for Education
in the Commonwealth,
The College of Preceptors,
Coppice Row, Theydon Bois, Essex,
December 28.

Royals at work, at home and abroad

From Mr Tim O'Donovan

Sir, I have carried out a survey of the official engagements carried out by the Royal Family during 1995, as reported in the Court Circular.

	A	B	C	D	E
The Queen	167	51	295	543	106
Duke of Edinburgh	228	141	32	401	222
Queen Mother	28	5	9	42	
Prince of Wales	261	108	103	471	134
Princess of Wales	32	10	30	62	65
Duke of York	44	29	8	81	21
Princess Edward	51	40	25	116	103
Princess Royal	250	93	84	427	148
Princess Margaret	87	38	8	133	5
Duke of Gloucester	82	35	22	139	46
Duchess of Gloucester	107	31	3	141	20
Duke of Kent	134	49	29	212	76
Duchess of Kent	121	25	11	157	10
Princess Alexandra	100	34	17	151	18

A Official visits, opening ceremonies and other engagements
B Receptions, lunches, dinners and banquets
C Other engagements, including investitures, meetings attended and audiences given
D Total number of engagements in UK
E Total number of engagements on official overseas tours

Yours faithfully,
TIM O'DONOVAN,
Mariners, The Avenue,
Datchet, Berkshire.
December 31.

NHS charges

From Dr Alan Blackburn

Sir, I am amazed at the naïveté expressed by Dr Kreeger in his GP complaint at being charged by a GP colleague for photocopies of a patient's notes (letter, December 28).

The NHS pays us to provide certain core services, and for these we are not allowed to make any additional charge. However, an increasing part of our daily routine is now taken up by time-consuming paperwork and correspondence which is outside these core services.

I estimate that I spend one to two hours every day dealing with requests for information from mortgage companies, holiday insurance schemes, BUPA, solicitors, employers etc. This entails my collating the information from patient records and dictating letters, and then taking up secretarial time with typing the reports and photocopying relevant hospital letters.

Would an accountant, solicitor or bank manager do the same type of work and not charge for it? The Government is forever exhorting GPs to

become more businesslike, and we all have our mortgages to pay.

Yours faithfully,
A. R. BLACKBURN,
Gulldowns Group Practice,
The Oaks Surgery,
Applegarth Avenue,
Gulldown, Surrey.

From Dr Anthony J. S. Nicholls

Sir, I do not think there is sufficient information in Dr Kreeger's letter to justify his complaint at being charged for photocopies of a patient's records.

If the patient had been referred by the general practitioner with an inadequate history then Dr Kreeger is entitled to have more information without charge. If the patient came to Dr Kreeger without the GP's knowledge or referral then the GP practice is entitled to charge a reasonable fee for the secretarial and administrative time involved.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY J. S. NICHOLLS,
The Pinn Medical Centre,
8 Eastcott Road, Pinner, Middlesex.
December 28.

Stress in anaesthetists

From the President of the Association of Anaesthetists of Great Britain and Ireland

Sir, Dr Simon Wessely ("What if your surgeon's a junkie?", December 19) states that "Of all the medical specialists, anaesthetists have the highest suicide rate". While the rate is undeniably high, we know of no evidence to support that assertion.

The high suicide rate among all doctors is a cause for major concern, and support for stressed doctors is of paramount importance. Since 1981 this association's pioneering sick-doctor scheme has proved very beneficial and has been imitated by many other schemes.

We have recently set up a working party, with Royal College of Psychiatrists representation, to consider the whole problem of stress among anaesthetists and at the same time to authenticate the data on suicide.

Yours faithfully,
S. MORELL LYONS, President,
Association of Anaesthetists
of Great Britain and Ireland,
9 Bedford Square, WCI.

Too close to the fire

From Mrs Sheila Stevens

Sir, I read with interest in Dr Stuttaford's medical briefing today that the correct medical term for the mortling of legs caused by sitting too close to the fire is *fivedo peticularis*. I think I still prefer the more picturesque term used for this condition in the Glasgow of my childhood — fire tartan.

Yours faithfully,
SHEILA STEVENS,
8 Redhouse Drive, Sonning Common,
Reading, Berkshire.
December 28.

East Sussex housing

From the Chairman of the East Sussex Association of Local Councils

Sir, Jill Parkin, in reporting the Debate over additional housing in East Sussex ("Concrete mixers head for Kipling country", Weekend, December 23) is mistaken in believing that there is little opposition to the proposed allocation of the 2,333 new homes to be provided annually in the county between now and 2006.

Local communities under the South Downs have rejected the Lewes District Council draft local plan for that period since it includes proposals to release substantial new greenfield sites for housing in their villages. Their objections are similar to those to the new towns proposed for the same area after 2006.

The parish and town councils represented by this association, along with other bodies in Sussex, have great reservations concerning the processes whereby the figures for these housing allocations are obtained by the Department of the Environment.

In particular we question the validity of using as starting points projections of population and housing change which are based on current demographic and social trends and converting these into housing provision figures without complementary statistical details or evaluation.

We require clear reasoning and reliable statistics from those who advocate such development, neither of which we have found available during the current debate.

Yours faithfully,
A. J. MACGILLIVRAY,
Chairman, East Sussex
Association of Local Councils,
Sussex House,
212 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex.
December 29.

Films that deliver a slap in the face

From Ms Veronica Kish

Sir, The latest James Bond film, *Goldeneye* (review, Arts, November 23), dismayed me, in that a villain yet again has a badly scarred face.

The stereotype that good people are beautiful and bad people ugly is implicated in the teasing and bullying that many children and teenagers suffer because of their appearance. As a health professional working with children disfigured by burns, dog bites, birthmarks and other conditions, I am distressed at the prejudice, in the street and playground.

Fairy tales are a strong source of this stereotype, with ugly witches, wicked dwarfs, monsters and freaks. Film has supported them: the villain in *Waterworld* lost an eye in battle, *Batman Forever* introduced Two Face, with half his face deformed, and *The Lion King* named its villain Scar.

Given the incidence of disfigurement, such representations are disturbing. Some 400,000 people in Britain are disfigured, and one school-aged child in 500 has a significant facial deformity.

A villain doesn't always have to look horrid. The beautiful wicked witch of C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* shows this. Our beliefs about appearance are flawed enough, without further impetus to prejudice.

Yours sincerely,
VERONICA KISH,
Changing Faces,
1 & 2 Junction Mews, Paddington, W2.

Who was it from?

From Emeritus Professor W. G. V. Balchin

Sir, The Post Office has done a magnificent job this year in delivering 1.9 billion items of Christmas mail (news in brief, December 23), but it could be even more helpful if it indicated in all cases where and when the items have been posted.

The present franking system is in serious need of an overhaul — an analysis of the 95 items of Christmas mail which we received has revealed that the location of posting was absent or undecipherable in 42 per cent, the date of posting was absent or undecipherable in 40 per cent, and both location and date were absent or undecipherable in 30 per cent.

This lack of information can be quite critical at Christmas when so many friends and relations sign cards with a simple Christmas name, not realising that you might know two Muriels, three Georges and four Lucys. Without localisation franking one often needs a graphologist to pinpoint the sender.

Yours faithfully,
W. G. V. BALCHIN,
10 Low Wood Rise, Ben Rhydding,
Ilkley, West Yorkshire.
December 24.

Driven to distraction

From Mr R. Compton

Sir, Having paid my car insurance premium, I awaited a slim envelope containing the renewal certificate.

The envelope from my insurers was very large. In addition to the certificate it contained:
a "thank you" letter;
another copy of the policy document (I already have one);
a 58-page "welcome booklet";
a schedule headed "Excesses for young drivers" (despite my wife and I being the only named drivers, and no longer eligible);
a further envelope containing "a specially selected range of additional benefits & services";
a "customer care" form asking for my comments;
an "invitation" to apply for home insurance;
and a shiny laminated card telling me what to do if I crash.

I do wonder how much lower my premium could have been if I had just received the renewal certificate.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER COMPTON,
Woodbridge, Charlwood Road,
Hookwood, Horley, Surrey.

Not to be copied

From Mr Roy Dean

Sir, It is noticeable in television crime series that the police so seldom bother to lock their cars when they get out. Even Inspector Morse sets an occasionally bad example.

Yours faithfully,
ROY DEAN,
14 Blyth Road, Bromley, Kent.

As God intended?

From Mr Chandra P. de Fonseka

Sir, Even if St Matthew appeared nude before God (report and photograph, December 28) what reason could there be for him being depicted in that state before Man?

Yours faithfully,
C. P. DE FONSEKA,
10 Glenelven Road,
Whitchurch, Bristol, Avon.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782-5046.

صلى الله عليه وسلم

OBITUARIES

HEINER MÜLLER

Heiner Müller, dramatist, died of cancer on December 30 aged 66. He was born on January 9, 1929.

A DRAMATIST, director and poet, Heiner Müller was an outstanding challenger to the twin orthodoxies of Marxist and bourgeois theatrical and intellectual traditions in Germany. A hulk of a man whose trade marks were a fat, pungent cigar, unwashed straggling hair and thick spectacles, Müller was one of the great rule-breakers in a country obsessed by rules.

Even before the fall of the Berlin Wall, and with many of his plays banned from the East German stage, he somehow managed to elicit from the authorities a pass enabling him to dine and drink with socialites and publishers in West Berlin and then return, swaying and perorating on the senselessness of history, across the silent guarded border in the middle of the night, back to his one room flat in the proletarian Hellersdorf high-rise district of East Berlin.

A student of Bertolt Brecht's at the Berliner Ensemble in the 1950s, Müller turned his teacher's techniques against his originator. While every bit as harsh as Brecht in his critique of capitalism, he disagreed with the playwright's residual belief in communism as a more humane system and condemned his mentor's refusal publicly to disavow Stalin.

Throughout Müller's writing runs an awareness of treachery repeating itself in great matters and small throughout German history. He charted his own fascination with the phenomenon by describing how he feigned sleep as a four-year-old in 1933 when his father, a Social Democrat in Saxony, was hauled off to an internment camp by the Nazis.

That was my first treason," he later remarked. Bernis approach to power was always playful — he continued to live in the East which, in his hermetic



containment and delusional aspects he found to be "like the Prussia of Kleist, or the England of Shakespeare", and he even accepted the National Prize for Literature, despite the fact that many of the works for which it was granted were banned.

His work covers an extraordinary range of styles. His first play *Der Lohndrucker* (The Man Who Kept Down Wages) was a Brechtian meditation on forms of exploitation, based on the story of Hans Garbe, an East German Stakhanovite hero who risks his life to keep the factory furnaces going and meet the party's production targets. It was immed-

ately taken off stage by the censor as politically inexpedient and not performed in the East until 1988.

The deconstruction of heroism was to be a persistent theme in Müller's oeuvre. By the early 1960s, he had departed from strict Brechtian theory and concentrated instead on the mythological treatments of history like *Germania Tod in Berlin* (Germania: Death in Berlin) which sought to place the 1953 workers' uprising in a pan-German context and restored the use of monologue to the modern German stage.

The most intricate and famous of his plays was the 1977

Hamletmaschine (Hamlet Machine), one of only a few of his works performed in Britain. It interweaves Shakespeare with exegeses on Baader-Meinhof terrorism, the murder of Sharon Tate and the quelling of the Hungarian uprising. Intended to be performed alongside Müller's translation of *Hamlet*, the play caused a legal battle when Michael Hamburger, Germany's foremost modern Shakespeare translator, claimed that Müller had plagiarised his work. Müller won his case when his lawyer Gregor Gysi (now a post-Communist politician) managed to convince the court that his client was genius enough to have translated the work from scratch in two months.

The last production of the play at the Deutsches Theater in East Berlin in 1989 lasted nine hours and was playing when the Berlin Wall fell. Müller rewrote sections of it nightly to reflect events happening a few streets away.

After the collapse of the regime, it was revealed that Müller had periodically provided information to the Stasi secret police. Unperturbed at the public scandal which ensued, he claimed to have done it "for reasons of dramaturgy — to get inside the minds of the main actors in our state".

Although Müller's plays were too abstruse to be widely known, his ideas were accessible to a wider public through his secondary, post-1989 career as enfant terrible, called in by mischievous chat-show producers to deflate the great and good and their hopes for the new united Germany. On the first anniversary of German unity he surpassed himself in both bad behaviour and theatrical

deconstruction of the television medium by sitting alongside ex-Chancellor Helmut Schmidt and other worries on a podium for the best part of an hour: he said nothing, drinking noisily from a bottle of Scotch and uttering not a word. "Please," implored the host, "tell us what you think about history." "What intellectuals call history has never been more than hard work to the lower orders," replied Müller tartly. "The only national identity in Germany is the mark," was another of his *bon mots* to gain national popularity. As head of the eastern branch of the German Academy of Arts, he was a robust defender of writers whom he believed had been unfairly condemned by their Western counterparts.

Diagnosed as suffering from terminal cancer in 1991, Müller had part of his oesophagus removed but continued to work, drink and smoke with gusto. His final production *Zement* (Cement) was a masterful reworking of Soviet revolutionary drama in the manner of classical drama. Staged in a condemned factory in the dying industrial zone of eastern Berlin, it was accessible only with great effort, the auditorium was freezing cold and the audience had to be supplied with vodka and blankets to prevent hypothermia. By turns bizarre, confusing and touching, it was Müller's characteristic farewell to German audiences.

The last three years of his life were spent back at the Berliner Ensemble where the ailing company had called in a "five-pack" of Germany's top directors to restore its fortunes. Müller was given full control last year after a bitter power-struggle with Peter Zadek, the west German director, who disapproved of his concentration on violent themes. His autobiography *War Without Battle* was published in 1992.

Müller was married three times. He is survived by his third wife, Brigitte Mayer, and their son.

LORD COLLISON

Lord Collison, CBE, former General Secretary of the National Union of Agricultural Workers and chairman of the Supplementary Benefits Commission, 1969-75, died on December 29 aged 86. He was born on May 10, 1909.



HAROLD COLLISON was an old-style trade unionist who had an increasing impact on Labour politics through his long, 17-year service on the TUC General Council. For 12 years he was chairman of its social insurance and industrial welfare committee and, as such, caught the eye of Richard Crossman who at the time was deeply involved with his 1957 national superannuation plan.

More than a decade later it fell to Crossman, as Secretary of State for Social Services, to offer him the post of chairman of the Supplementary Benefits Commission (the old National Assistance Board). Typically described by his patron as "a great, big, tall, gangling man, a real slow-working-class chap", Collison was, in fact, a good deal more impressive than that. Created a life peer by Harold Wilson in December 1964, he had earlier that year been elected chairman of the TUC and, as a Labour peer, presided over the 1965 Brighton Congress — the first member of the House of Lords ever to do so.

The National Union of Agricultural Workers had always been part of the Labour leadership's Praetorian Guard — and, though never one of the major unions, was regularly represented on the party's National Executive Committee. Its strength lay among the farm workers of East Anglia, where in the 1950s it usually got a couple of its members returned to Parliament.

Harold Francis Collison, however, did not come from there but from Gloucestershire — though he started his career as a clerk in a Port of London stevedoring firm. But he soon gave that up and moved back to Gloucestershire where he got a job first as a general farm hand before switching to working on a poultry farm.

He helped to form the Stroud and District branch of the NUAW, later becoming organiser for the counties of Gloucestershire and Wootton Bassett. In 1946 he joined the head office staff in London, being elected General Secretary in 1953 — at a time when the union still had very much in its sights the abolition of the "tied cottage" system (something it had failed to obtain even from Aneurin Bevan during his time in charge of the Attlee Government's housing programme).

It was, however, a great source of pride to Collison that

he lived long enough to see farm workers afforded protection for their homes — even when they lost their jobs — under the 1977 Agricultural Rent Act.

By then, of course, he qualified very much as an elder statesman — having survived four years of serving a Tory Government as chairman of the Supplementary Benefits Commission between 1970 and 1974. In fact, Collison got on well with Crossman's successor, Sir Keith Joseph, and when he did finally retire in 1975, it was to a Labour Social Services Secretary, Barbara Castle, that he tendered his resignation. Free of the responsibilities of the Commission, he was able to devote himself much more fully to the business of the House of Lords — where he formed a useful duo on agricultural issues with Lord John Mackie, the wealthy farmer and Labour supporter whom James Callaghan appointed chairman of the Forestry Commission. Collison was a very popular member of the Upper House and, at least until ill-health overtook him, an assiduous attender.

But then, in a sense, he had always been a ready-made recruit to the stage army of the great and the good. Even in his days as a union general secretary he was a natural choice for membership of government committees and royal commissions — serving on the Pilkington Committee on Broadcasting which came down heavily against ITV in 1962, the Donovan Royal Commission on Trade Unions and Employers' Associations whose recommendations predated the 1969 White Paper in *Place of Strife* and of the rolling Council on Tribunals, which gave him as useful an apprenticeship as he could have had for his later work with the Supplementary Benefits Commission. It was in recognition of these activities that he was appointed CBE by a Tory Government in 1961.

Collison married in 1946. Kate Hanks who survives him. There were no children.

JAMES HEPBURN



James Hepburn, DFC, tap dancer and airman, died on December 15 aged 58. He was born on November 3, 1907.

WITTY and debonair but a stout believer in Labour principles, James Geoffrey Cutcliffe Hepburn was a central figure in Hampstead's social and socialist scene. From an early age he moved in bohemian circles, acquainted through his mother, the poet Anna Wickham, with such literary and artistic figures as D.H. Lawrence, Edith Sitwell, David Low and Malcolm Lowry — he was to remain a lifelong friend of the last.

His mother was equally at home in a political environment and a solid supporter of the suffragist movement. One of Hepburn's earliest memories was of a garden party when he and two other small boys paraded the lawn, each holding a placard. The first read "votes", the second "for" and the third "women".

Hepburn's mother was a fiercely unconventional woman. Her husband, Patrick Hepburn, was a lawyer, though in his spare time he studied the planet Saturn on which he became a world authority and learnt Hebrew in order to translate the Psalms. In 1919 the family moved to a tall Victorian house on Parliament Hill — a spacious, four-storey building in which the bathroom doubled up as an aviary and the

windows looked out over Hampstead Heath.

Anna Wickham, however, could never squeeze herself into the role of model housewife which her husband expected of her and, when her youngest son died of scarlet fever, she left her husband for six months and went to Paris taking her teenage son Jim with her. Here, in *salon* society, he further widened his acquaintance, meeting such figures as Ezra Pound, Sylvia Beach, Djuna Barnes and Nina Hammett. The portrait which the latter painted of him shows the thoughtful face of the suave young man who at that time played chess with Aleister Crowley and beat him, and coolly accepted the fact that men should fight duels over his mother.

Hepburn was educated at University College School, Hampstead, but left at the age of 17 to work for the London, Midland and Scottish railway company. He had a stammer, and in the evenings his mother taught him to sing in an attempt to cure it; he also attended a nearby drama school. It was by chance that Hepburn then stumbled into a profession, becoming a repertory actor and singing for a year with Stanley Holloway in *Hit the Deck*.

His mother's friend Augustus John then introduced him to the impresario C.B. Cochran and Hepburn was invited to accompany Noël Coward as his understudy in the American tour of *This Year of Grace*. In New York Hepburn studied tap dancing. Fred Astaire had developed new tap routines, using not just snappy foot rhythms but fast ballerina movements as well. It was this method of dancing which Hepburn was to adopt and take back with him to England where he taught them to his younger brother John. Together they made a double act, called first the Two Madisons and later the Hepburn Brothers.

Together they travelled the theatres of England and the Continent, happy to dance at any venue, however lowly. On their last appearance they

were bottom of the bill, while Vera Lynn was at the top.

When war broke out Hepburn joined the RAF. He had always been fascinated by aircraft and, as a child playing with a typewriter for the first time, had made his own magazine about aeroplanes. He served first as a tailgunner but, perhaps inheriting something of his father's interest in astronomy, became a navigator. Flying seemed to come naturally to him and once, with 216 Squadron in North Africa, he successfully made a forced landing in the middle of a desert sandstorm. In 1943 he was awarded the DFC.

In 1948 Hepburn left the RAF to form a company called Eagle Aviation, pioneering the idea of freight aviation. He operated throughout the Berlin airlift, flying 28 round trips in ten days. He also became only the second man ever to fly around the world from east to west. But having married in 1950 Hepburn decided that family life was incompatible with operational flying. He joined the RAF again as an air traffic controller and stayed in this role from 1951 until 1960.

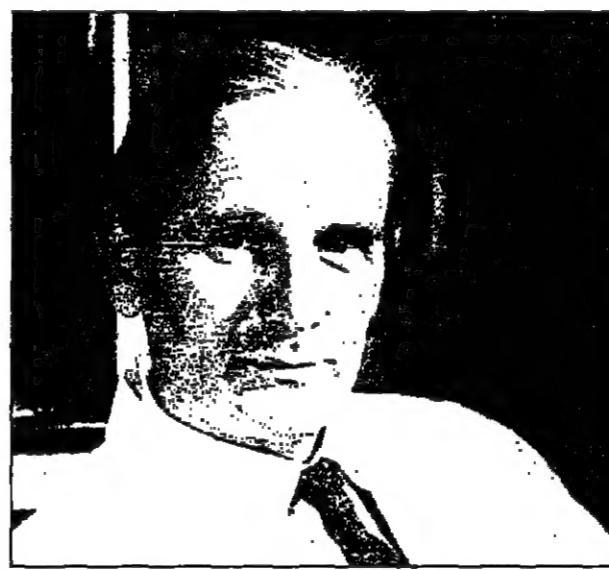
In the 1960s Hepburn joined the Civil Service, working for the Ministry of Defence. The nature of his job remained a closely guarded secret. Even his wife, familiar with government operations at Bletchley Park, did not know precisely what he did, though speculation was that he was involved in nuclear operations.

On retiring in 1977, Hepburn, with characteristic energy and commitment took a job in Heal's bedding factory and joined the Hampstead Labour Party. He also became an enthusiastic private brewer of beer, swilling down his pints to denunciations of the big breweries. He remained all his life a man of modest ambition, though his last wish, he used to say, was not to die under a Tory government.

He is survived by his wife Margaret, by a daughter, two stepdaughters and his brother John with whom he used to dance.

CHARLES FLETCHER

Charles Fletcher, CBE, Professor of Clinical Epidemiology, London University, 1973-76, died on December 5 aged 84. He was born on June 5, 1911.



CHARLES FLETCHER was best known to the public as a pioneer in the use of television as a means of medical education. In 1949, when he first suggested that doctors should explain to patients the causes of their illnesses, he stirred up a storm of protest among conservative medical circles. But Fletcher continued to campaign and in 1958, under his aegis, the BBC began a series of television programmes entitled *Your Life in Their Hands*, which included footage of operations. In its leading articles, *The British Medical Journal* attacked this series vituperatively for several weeks in succession, arguing that giving patients information about disease was harmful and could lead to abuse.

It was a brave step that Fletcher took, and the ethical problems involved were complex, but he — a man of proven principle, with a sound medical knowledge, a pleasing on-screen personality and an attractive voice — succeeded where many others might have failed. *Your Life in Their Hands* was one of the most successful medical programmes ever produced and Fletcher continued to be medical adviser to the BBC from 1961 to 1972.

Charles Montague Fletcher had been innovative throughout his life. Having studied medicine at Trinity College, Cambridge — where he took first-class honours in both Part I and Part II of the Tripos — he worked as a Nuffield Research Fellow under Professor Leslie Wills at Oxford. It was here that he was to become the first doctor to administer penicillin to a human being.

Fletcher also pioneered the development of quantification of the chest radiographic appearances of the miners' disease, pneumoconiosis. After leaving Oxford, he went to

Cardiff as the director of the Pneumoconiosis Unit. It was here that he became aware of "observer error" — the widely different interpretation of the same chest radiograph by different observers — and, in order to introduce better standardisation, he designed a semi-quantitative scoring system (later to be extended by his colleague John Gilson) which is now accepted worldwide.

It was while in Cardiff that Fletcher became interested in the effects of inhaled particles on the lung and the natural history of chest disease and, perhaps more importantly, it was here that he found his commitment to epidemiology (at a time when this methodology was barely accepted by the academic medical fraternity) in order to study disease before the symptoms surfaced. His observations on miners contributed in a major way to the successful prevention of this form of pneumoconiosis. In recognition of this work he was appointed CBE in 1952.

Fletcher, however, longed for more direct clinical involvement in his research, and in 1952 he joined the Royal Postgraduate Medical School at the Hammersmith Hospital. Tuberculosis had just been conquered by the development of antituberculous chemotherapy, so Fletcher turned his mind to the other most com-

mon chest diseases — chronic bronchitis and emphysema. He developed various new epidemiological methods, including the study of early disease in prospective cases, and spent the next twenty years of his life unravelling the natural history of these afflictions.

Working with a number of other eminent scientists, Fletcher demonstrated conclusively the direct relationship between cigarette smoking and chronic bronchitis and emphysema and it was he who was largely responsible for drafting the first and the second Royal College of Physicians reports in 1962 and 1971 to alert the public to the hazards of smoking.

Fletcher was a founder member of Action on Smoking and Health and ardently campaigned against smoking. He himself had learnt to knit during the war and recommended knitting as an occupation for those who found it hard to give up cigarettes. Each of his grandchildren had a jersey made by him. In retirement he also learnt to do tapestry and he enjoyed keeping bees in the small orchard where he lived on the Isle of Wight, and making his own bread, wine and beer. He is survived by his wife Louisa, and their three children.

Church news

Appointments
The Rev Mary Judson, Assistant Curate, Chester-le-Street: to be Priest-in-charge, Bishopwearmouth St Mark, Millfield (Durham).
The Rev Paul Langham, Chaplain and Fellow, St Catherine's College, Cambridge: to be Vicar, Combe Down w Monkton Combe and South Stoke (Bath and Wells).
The Rev Pat Lawless, Curate (NSM), Christ Church, Frome: to be Curate (NSM), Wells w Vobster w Buckland Dinham, Elm, Whitley and Chantry (Bath and Wells).
The Rev Rob Marshall: formerly Communications Officer for the diocese of London: to be media adviser (part-time) to the Archbishop of York.
The Rev Dr Charles Miller, Priest-in-charge, New Marston (Oxford): has been ap-

pointed the Michael and Joan Ramsey Professor of Historical and Ascetical Theology, Nashotah House, Wisconsin, diocese Milwaukee, USA.

The Rev Mark Millward, Vicar, Pennywell St Thomas w Grindon St Oswald: to be whole-time Church of England Chaplain to the City Hospitals, Sunderland (NHS Trust) (Durham).
The Rev Mark Oakley, Assistant Curate at St John's Wood: to be Chaplain to the Bishop of London (London).
The Rev Kevin Partington, Curate, All Saints, Satterhebble, Halifax: to be Vicar, All Saints, Pontefract (Wakefield).
The Rev Philip Swindells, Rector, Clapham: to be also Priest-in-charge, Shillington (St Albans).

C. DAY LEWIS IS POET LAUREATE

By RITA MARSHALL

Mr. Cecil Day Lewis, aged 83, a former Professor of Poetry at Oxford University, was named last night as Poet Laureate. He succeeds Mr. John Masefield who died last May.

An announcement from 10 Downing Street recorded the Queen's approval of Mr. Day Lewis's appointment as "Poet Laureate in ordinary to her Majesty". The poet has been a regular institution in England since the seventeenth century, and previous Poet Laureates include Wordsworth, Southey, and Tennyson.

At his home in Greenwich, last night, Mr. Day Lewis described his appointment as "enlightening". He added: "But honestly I know absolutely nothing about what this post means."

Today, Mr. Day Lewis, who has known unofficially of his appointment for a fortnight, will go to the library in Kenwood House to look at the book on Poet Laureates. He said: "I haven't dared go until this was official."

"I think I get paid something, but not very much. Anyway perhaps it will be enough to keep me in bourbon whisky for a day or two." In fact, the Poet Laureate receives £70 a year, plus £27 in lieu of a part of sack.

Mr. Day Lewis continued: "Being Poet Laureate is considered by some an accolade, by others the kiss of death. I can't say I'm anything but pleased."

I don't think today one has court poetry as in the eighteenth century. If something is very

ON THIS DAY

January 2, 1968

Cecil Day Lewis (1904-72) was the oldest of the trio, Auden, Spender and Day Lewis — the writers of the "new poetry" in the early 30s. He achieved a second reputation, under the pseudonym of Nicholas Blake, as a writer of detective stories of considerable merit.

moving, something like Aberfan or perhaps the day when Prince Charles becomes Prince of Wales, there might be an opportunity or a desire to produce a poem on such a theme. Personally I shall just go on writing poetry, that's what a poet should do."

He has already written in celebration of one royal event. To commemorate the birth of Prince Andrew in 1960 he wrote an ode which was set to music by Sir Arthur Bliss and which ended with the lines:

You princely baby, you pretty dear,
For you we bring
The birthday honours of the quickening year.
Mr Day Lewis did not know he was being

considered for the appointment until he had a letter from the Prime Minister on December 14 asking if his name could be put forward. He replied that he would be delighted.

"I was out when the next letter came from Mr. Masefield that I had been chosen," Mr Day Lewis said. "It meant a lot of family giggling over Christmas. My children — Tamsin, she's 14, and Daniel, who is 10 — have been teasing me..."

By STEPHEN JESSEL
Cecil Day Lewis, whose appointment as Poet Laureate in succession to the late John Masefield was announced last night, was once described by *The Times Literary Supplement* as "the personally favoured poet, the specially delighted-in poet of the few, but even readers whose immediate response to him is rather hesitant do, in all likelihood, feel for him something more than a grudging admiration..."

His critics have sometimes objected that he lacks the charisma that Yeats, Graves and Auden have displayed and that his standpoint and personality are not so clearly defined in the public mind that what he says commands instant and respectful public attention.

But his poetic skill, his sincerity, his earnestness and his rarely but questioned, and his poetry often displays, in the view of many critics, a sharpness and conviction that recall the "committed" days of the 1930s and the money-for-Spain movements...

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